



# THE BROAD ARROW.

VOLUME I.

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THE  
BROAD ARROW:  
BEING PASSAGES FROM THE HISTORY  
OF  
MAIDA GWYNNHAM,  
A LIFER.

BY OLINÉ KEESE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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## P R E F A C E.

AFTER much hesitation, and with much doubt, I now send forth this work.

So many attractive books on Australian and convict-life have appeared of late years, that I fear mine may be repelled as an unsuccessful imitation of other authors, unless I be permitted to explain that it was wholly planned, mostly written, and intended for publication several years ago. With the circumstances which frustrated that intention it would be impertinent to trouble the reader.

As one reason why I should *not* publish this book, I am told that the subject is unbecoming a woman's pen. If it be so, and if there be censure attached to a handling of it, I would

face that censure, and deem myself happy in having written the 'Broad Arrow,' if but one sister, now trembling on the brink of ruin, read it, and enter into my belief—that loss of virtue is (in *most* cases) the first and fatal impulse towards those depths of sin whose end it has been my painful lot to witness in Tasmania.

I am also told that transportation has ceased to be a topic of public interest—an assertion I would not only *doubt*, but *test*, even though it be made by reliable authority. I would doubt it—fain to believe that so long as England has convicts to punish, the mode of punishing them can never be a question void of earnest, prayerful, and responsible interest.

I would test it—though feebly indeed—by placing the 'Broad Arrow' in the reader's hand, leaving it to his consideration with this simple statement—

‘ We speak that we do know,  
And testify that we have seen.’

Lest any of my friends should be hurt at the

publication of this book without their knowledge, I would apologise that I considered it best to act on my own responsibility, from an unwillingness to have any one but myself to blame in the event of an unfavourable reception of the work.

O. K.

LONDON,  
*February 9th, 1859.*

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# THE BROAD ARROW.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE FESTIVAL.

‘ Oh ! let the merry bells ring round.’

A JOYFUL clangour is rising from the tower of St. Judas as the cold grey of the venerable cathedral warms itself in the afternoon sun. Our city is very gay. Bustle and excitement jostle one another in the streets. The shops display their rainbow assortments of finery with more than ordinary taste. Carriages throng the thoroughfare, and from the carriages fashion and beauty gaze placidly on the crowd making its way towards the Queen’s high road. Placards announce a ball—and the newspapers hint that this ball is to be a nonpareil.

But why is all this ? Wherefore so highly beats the pulse of expectation ? What may be the festival, and what this ball to celebrate it ?

It is the festival of the assizes ! and the ball the ‘ Assize Ball !’



Doubtless you have hitherto mistaken the meaning of the word 'assize;' do not be ashamed—you know the old saying about the bliss of ignorance—consult Johnson. Then, perhaps, this most solemn season of the year—this fore-glimpse of that awful time when man must face his Maker at earth's last tribunal—is being thus joyously welcomed, to anticipate that mysterious spirit which shall prompt the saints to exclaim 'Alleluia!' as the smoke of the tormented goes up for ever and ever. Or it may be, that as the calendar proclaims an increase of crime, showing that a larger than usual number of our fellow creatures await their doom from the voice of justice, it is expected that the depression cast over the city will be of so deep and debilitating a nature, that the city must droop in hysteric weakness or sink in hypochondriac melancholy, unless a stimulant be administered. So present pain is quieted by a promised ball of unprecedented grandeur. The bells from St. Judas are made to outswell the prison bell; and, amid the hurry of preparation, the clank of the felon's chain passes unheard through the very midst.

The judges drive into the city. The stimulants take effect; the city does not faint, on the contrary, it never looked so blooming, never attired itself so gaily, as it does to-day. Oh, wondrous balm for bleeding hearts! Surely 'tis the balm of Gilead!

No thinking person objects to pomp and state on



Drawn and Colored by A. K. K. K.



all occasions calculated to impress the mind (especially that of the common people) with a sense of superior power. But is there not the pomp of the funeral?—funereal pomp. Does not the sight of the plumed hearse fill the breast with solemnity? Does not the crowd intuitively doff its cap before it? Do not the voice of laughter and the song of thoughtlessness involuntarily cease, or drop to softer tones, when the toll of the death bell meets the ear?

Would the effect on the public mind be lessened were the judges to enter with more of such pomp and less of the present gaiety? Would justice lose one of her stern prerogatives were she to come robed in the sable of that woe of which she is so often the precursor? Would she frown less terror upon evil doers were she ushered into her judgment seat with sounds betokening more of sorrow than joy?

Would the captive pining in his cell, or the broken-hearted parent tossing on his bed of blighted hope, watch with less horror for the dark consummation of his grief, were not its approach heralded by those cheery chimes, seeming to say: ‘I will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh?’

Would the *cause* that brings our judges to our cities be less hated by the youthful heart were it taught to associate more of the funeral and less of

the feast with the onroll of the carriage that bears sorrow, punishment, death in its rear?

We cannot answer for all children, but we know of one, who, when hurried forward to see 'the judges come in,' shrunk behind the crowd to ruminate on some mystery, and, unable to fathom it, burst into tears, exclaiming, 'Why do they let those happy bells ring, the prisoners must hear them?'

The day for the ball arrives. You are invited to attend. Your particular attention is directed to a very elegantly-dressed young man—Captain Norwell—as elegant in person and deportment as in attire. He is unanimously voted a fascinating man by the fair sex, and the king of the evening by the dark. He is surrounded by an admiring group of both sexes. Many a plotting mother opines that he will make an excellent husband, and many an anxious father pictures how well his jewel of a daughter would look in so brilliant a setting; while some elder brother apostrophises him—that is, Captain Norwell—as a 'lucky dog,' and lucky dog means a great deal in fashionable phraseology.

'What happy chance brought you to our part of the world at this season of the year, Captain Norwell—the ball?' The querist is a lady old enough to have three grown-up daughters.

'No,' replies Norwell, in a tone nonchalant; 'but since I was here, I could not resist the temp-

tation of mixing with such an assemblage of beauty as rumour said these walls would witness ; and for once I find she has been very humble in her statements, and disappointment has not followed in her train.' A gracious bow to the blushing group around him accompanies this speech.

'You come to attend the assizes, I suppose?'

'Partly ; I heard that a very interesting trial was to come on, and having a little time to spare, I ran down to hear it.'

Several voices ask—

'Oh ! to which one do you allude?'

Neither fascinated ladies nor scheming parents observe that a slight shade passes over Captain Norwell's fine countenance, and a still slighter tremulousness into his voice, as he replies—

'I speak of Martha Grylls's.'

'You will put me out of love with dancing if you talk of that woman,' says an animated girl, whose merry laugh belies her words. 'I shall fancy I am dancing to the clank of chains, or waltzing to Pestal, if you talk any more such horrors.'

And the fantastic toe seems all of a fidget to whirl off the impatient fair one ; but the pertinacious mother is not to be stopped. To stop Norwell in the vicinity of her daughters is the only stoppage she meditates.

'Which was Martha Grylls's? Not having

the honour of such distinguished acquaintance, *I* do not know each prisoner by name.'

A quick, searching glance at the lady, and Norwell answers—

'The young woman indicted for forgery. I—I mean child-murder.'

'Oh! that beautiful woman? One would hardly think so lovely a face could belong to such a wretch: so calm and innocent, too, she looked.'

'*I* do not think she *did* look so very *innocent*,' interrupts the animated girl; 'there was a flinty hardihood in her face that quite prevented me from pitying her, as I should have done *had* she cried. My heart was quite steeled against her; *I* felt no pity.'

'Flint and steel together should produce a spark, or one of the two could not be genuine,' says Captain Norwell.

'She stood so erect, and eyed the court so proudly, as if she would say, "Sentence me to death and I will thank you!" Once, though, I did think she was going to break down. Did you observe, Captain Norwell, about the middle of the trial, how she faltered; and then, when she turned toward the door, how she started as if she saw something which renewed her courage? She certainly saw some person or thing, for the hard look came back to her face. I wonder what or who it was. Perhaps she saw her father or mother.'

‘That would have softened her!’ replies a gentle voice, from a pale, interesting girl, whose diminutive stature has hidden her from immediate sight.

• ‘Perhaps it was an accomplice then. The change on her countenance was unmistakeable.’

Another in that ball-room had marked the change in the prisoner’s manner as her faltering gaze fell on a certain corner of the court. Ay—he noticed it, but not to wonder at its cause. To his heart the change brought at once ease and pain—ease to the diseased part, and pain to what portion of it remained uncontaminated.

‘Such stony hardness,’ persisted the young lady.

‘There is the stony hardness of despair—a breaking heart may lie behind a brazen wall,’ replies the gentle voice from the corner.

These words are uttered timidly, but with great feeling; and the speaker, raising her eyes to Norwell, fancies that gentleman agrees with her, for she notes an expression of unutterable anguish momentarily distort his features.

The expression does not escape the vigilant eyes of plotting mothers and sanguine fathers. It goes far to the strengthening of the former’s opinings, and deep into the jewelled picturings of the latter.

‘Feeling sits so remarkably well on his handsome face,’ remarks one parent.



It does indeed. An electric photographer could immortalize it.

You have been invited to attend the ball on purpose to hear this common-place, out-of-place conversation—as out of place in a ball-room as a ball is out of time in an assize week. Fancy how awkward it will look to see in the same gazette, column by column—

The Assizes! The Ball!

Your presence is again required, but to a very different scene. Where you are now wanted there will be no festoon of blooming flowers wreathing a fragrant archway above you; no mimic suns making the decorated ceiling a lesser firmament of glory; there will be no radiant faces to greet you with the lustrous smile of excitement, no sound of music and dancing. Await you there a dark, stone archway, and an iron gate beneath it. There will be the relentless grating of its hinges, with the heavy sound of ponderous keys; and a coldness in the aspect of the building you are to enter will communicate itself to your soul, making you shudder to pass within its dreary portal. You must follow the guide along that narrow passage, where your footstep echoes cheerlessly through the dismal corridor. A doubly-locked door swings itself solemnly back, and there is silence, darkness, despair.—Pass on.

The heavily-heaved sigh that just falls upon

your ear, as the lock springs from its socket, only makes the silence deeper. Pass on. The gloomy flicker of the miniature lamp, outhanging from the wall, serves only to show you the darkness. The look of apathy fixed on you by the occupant of the cell only reminds you that that despair is deepest which gives no outward sign. Pass on.

‘Martha Grylls—a gentleman to speak to you.’

The hopeful tone and the earnest glance astonish you, as energetically raising her hand to shade her eyes, the prisoner asks—

‘Who is he?’

Pain succeeds your astonishment as you hear the utter hopelessness of the tone with which she answers—

‘I don’t wish to see him. I’ll see no one.’

And the hand before shading her eyes, closes resolutely over them, as she drops her head, refusing to look at the clergyman, who is the gentleman announced.

It is Martha Grylls you look upon. You heard of her in the ball-room, and are prepared to meet her in the felon’s cell. ● Her real name is Maida Gwynnham; but under the above alias she has been convicted of child-murder, for which crime the sentence of death was passed upon her at the assizes; since then, through the clemency of our lady sovereign, she has been reprieved, and now

transportation for life is all she will have to bear. Listen awhile, and you may find that balls and prisons are not always unconnected. You may then decide that, after all, there was not *much* out of the way in that talk in the assembly-room. We should never judge rashly; 'Things are not what they seem,' says one whose opinion is worthy. Listen! The clergyman who speaks is the Rev. Herbert Evelyn, not the chaplain of the gaol. He is admitted at this late hour by special authority of the powers that be.

'I am your friend, Martha; do not refuse to let me be so.'

'I have no friend; it is all false.'

'Martha, stop—stop and think. No friend?'

'None! none! Though once I madly thought I had.'

'And who was he?'

'HE! HE! Who said anything about he?'

There is an anxiety in Maida's voice, which tells Mr. Evelyn he has unwittingly touched the key-note to some part of her history—he wonders how to answer her. When she continues half aloud, in a soliloquative tone, and absent air—

'Did *he* send you? then he has not forgotten me!' And her hands unconsciously clasp and go with a tremble to her breast, as though she would hide some treasure there.

'No; he did not. One who loves you still

better, bids me visit you with a word of comfort from himself.'

Martha looks frightened, and with a bewildered air, asks—

'What do you mean? If *he* did not send, he cannot care for me; and there is no one else in the world to care for me, or think of me!'

Mr. Evelyn goes toward her, and is about to lay his hand on her shoulder, but she waves him back, and he perceives that the blood has rushed to her very temples, and that passion quivers on her clenched lips; he has time only to remark this, 'ere she bursts forth—

'He never loved me! and now he is trying to win some other fond and foolish heart to its own destruction.'

She presses her hand to her burning brow, and proceeds:—

'Ay! he will break some other heart when mine is sinking far away. Ay! he will tell the same lying tale to some unthinking girl, thoughtless and wayward as I was; and she, poor fondling, will believe him, and he will deceive her, and she will be left; and fear or pride will drive her from her home; she will fly to hide her disgrace; she will try to die, but death hates the wretched. She will steal to give her infant bread; she will be sent to prison, and thence across the seas; and

we shall meet—two victims to his lies. Ah! how I shall love her!’

She abruptly stops.

‘Was he at the ball last night?’ not waiting for an answer. ‘He was in the court—I saw him. I was on the point of giving way when our eyes met—it was enough; that glance was fire to the dying embers—he understands *my* eye; he read its promise and seemed satisfied; there was—but was he at the ball last night? there is always a ball to commemorate the assizes. Was he?’

Mr. Evelyn answers not.

‘Ah! you are surprised; you thought I spoke of a poor man. No—no! such glories are reserved for the rich; they may sin, and hide their sin in a golden grave; they may break innocent hearts, and the world ignore the fact; it is these sins that fill these cells; it is these sins that will people perdition; and if God sees as man sees—’

But her voice fails, the blood leaves her temples, and faint from excitement and want of rejected food, she sinks insensible to the earth.

As Mr. Evelyn quits the prison, he sees a gentleman wrapped in a long loose cloak, standing opposite the gateway, and gazing abstractedly towards the grated window; the moonlight falls on his upturned face.

‘If that index be true, all is not right within,’ thinks Mr. Evelyn. As he looks on the uplifted face, a text unconsciously forces its way into his mind; you may find that text in Mark ix. 44.

Mr. Evelyn cannot withdraw his eye from the manly figure before him; a strange fascination roots him to the spot; the text forces its way upward and upward—in a moment it will be on his lips. Mr. Evelyn does not wish this, but prophetic force is irresistible. Casting both eye and voice to the kerb-stone, he murmurs, as though he had no choice of refraining—

‘Where their worm dieth not!’

The stranger heaves a protracted sigh—the sigh disenchanting Mr. Evelyn, and he moves forward—the stranger starts to find himself observed—and Mr. Evelyn is slightly confused, but Captain Norwell is never at a loss: touching his hat gracefully, in a sentimental whisper he says—

‘Ho that would see Melrose aright  
Must visit it at pale moonlight.’

‘We are agreed on this point I see, sir,’ (again raising his hat). ‘I wish you a very good night,’ and Captain Norwell saunters down the street. As soon as Mr. Evelyn is out of sight he returns and rings at the gate.

‘Confound it! what a row—I only touched the bell and here is noise enough to wake Lucifer on his throne.’

The bell swings, thrilling its sonorous voice far into the stillness of night, and far into the chaos of many a sinner's heart. Shall you start to hear Captain Norwell classed with those many sinners? Ay! the stern iron of conviction smote with that prison bell deep into his very soul. You may be sure persons do not confound things for naught. Many will long to hush in everlasting confusion the tongue which, at God's day, shall proclaim from the housetops the secrets of an assembling world—but as unable to stay one word of that resistless tongue as Norwell to stop the majestic vibrations of the bell—they will call on the rocks to cover them from its accusing voice.

‘Can I see—Maida—I—Martha Grylls—’

‘No sir, past hours long ago if even you'd a permit.’

‘I leave to-morrow, cannot I be favoured as well as that gentleman just gone?’

‘Parson, sir. Wonderful, sir, how the ooman treats the gentry. Can't indeed, sir. Gentry round her like bees—'tracts 'em wonderful.’

‘Does she?’ Norwell tries to speak unconcernedly—‘She likes that I suppose?’

‘These creatures generally do, but *she* don't—*she* don't in no mistake.’

Norwell looks relieved, and it seems the information is worth money to him, for he drops a crown into the turnkey's hand—that official jerks

his cap in recognition of the palmy touch, but shakes his head at it.

‘Can’t, sir, indeed; it’s as much as my place is worth to try on that game: if you was a parson now,’ and the turnkey eyes him longingly as though he would there and then put him into the priest’s office for the sake of the crown, but he can discover no priest-like quality in Norwell’s dress, so reluctantly holds out the money towards him.

‘No, no, keep it,’ cried Norwell, impatiently, ‘it’s not for that; mind you gag your bell’s mouth before I come again.’

The gate closes after him and he mutters—

‘I’ve done all I can—I wish she knew it—O Maida, Maida, where will it end?’

‘Where will it end?’ Would that the question could be sounded through the length and breadth of the land! Would that it could be whispered to the ear of every dissolute man! It may begin here—here in England—but its circles spread and spread until, as this book shall show, they reach far-distant shores. Would God it ended there! for we (that is you and I) know of another shore which binds with its fiery grasp that river rolling on in blackness of darkness for ever. O God! if its circles should reach that shore!



## CHAPTER II.

MAIDA GWYNNHAM,

WAS the only child of a gentleman possessing a small country property in Essex. She lost her mother at an early age.

To Mr. Gwynnham his wife's death was a blow from which he never entirely recovered. One singular effect of his grief was the indifference he exhibited to the society of little Maida. 'The world,' he would say, 'shall not find fault with me—Maida shall have all the comforts and luxuries my means will allow—she shall be educated to move with credit in the position of life to which she is born—she shall be my companion—she shall share everything with her father but his heart—*that* he cannot give.'

God have mercy on thee, poor father! there comes a time when thou wilt need comfort more than thy neglected child now pines for love.

A child of the most ardent affections by nature, Maida's love would have brought back light and warmth to her father's heart, had he sought to unite

in her the sympathies which had been divided by death. But it was not until two years afterwards, when forced upon him by the disappointed importunities of the child herself, that he suddenly perceived he was rejecting the remedy his case required—the gentle offering of a daughter's heart.

Meanwhile the care of Maida's education devolved on others. She wanted nothing within her father's means; but she had already passed the age when children of sensitive mind begin to distinguish between benevolence and individual love. She had learnt that kind words are not always loving ones, and that kisses are not always the obeyed impulse of affection.

Her father's indifference became a source of sorrow which she could not resist, though she strove to hide it within herself.

Her proud spirit thought scorn of receiving mechanical attentions from her father, and once, when he had imprinted the usual kiss upon her lips, she raised her tiny hand and swept it hastily across her face, as if she would dash the offending token from her, exclaiming,

'I do not *want* his kisses, they are not *real*.'

It cost poor Maida an effort to reveal to her father that she sighed for love not freely offered. She long consumed her grief alone, and in the battlings of her yet infant mind, the reader may

discern the foreshadow of a spirit that can suffer and be strong.

Mr. Gwynnham was one day sitting in a root-house at the bottom of his garden. He heard a child sobbing; he was not sufficiently acquainted with the voice to recognise it. On looking out, he perceived Maida seated on a grassy mound beneath a chesnut-tree. By her side a dove-cage; she was pressing one of the doves to her bosom. Rocking herself to and fro, she talked to the bird in a low, wailing tone.

‘Happy bird! you have somebody to love you; Oh, mamma! mamma! why did you leave me? Your little Maida has no one to love *her*.’

The child stopped, struck by some sudden thought; she burst into a passionate flood of tears, rushed to the root-house, and facing Mr. Gwynnham, cried, clenching her fist, ‘If *you* will not love me I will get some one else to! I *will* be loved! I *must* be loved!’

Mr. Gwynnham appeared thunderstricken. There stood his, as he thought, timid child, looking so wild, so beautiful, so like his wife in miniature, that for some time he gazed on her in speechless amaze; he then sprang forward and caught the small, trembling, form in his arms, and Maida felt tears, *real* tears, fall like burning kisses on her cheek.

‘My Maida, you have been with me and I

knew it not ! Yes, you live again in the flashing eyes and indomitable soul of this neglected babe ! How blinded have I been ! My little one, you *shall* have love. All, all that was your mother's.'

'But won't you love me for myself?' said Maida ; 'I do not want to be loved instead of any one else !'

Thus did Maida Gwynnham take her father's heart by storm.

From this time they were always together.

Maida resembled her mother in beauty, virtues, and faults. Affectionate, firm, truthful, ardent and generous on the one hand ; haughty, passionate and impulsive on the other. She quite governed her father, who was not strong-minded, but kind, generous, and well educated. He very rarely controlled her in any thought, word, or deed ; no wonder, therefore, that the change which the following conversation reveals was distasteful to her. On the day she attained her sixteenth year, Mr. Gwynnham said, 'Maida, love, are you willing to leave me for a short period ? A year's instruction in music, French, and drawing will finish what I have begun ;' adding, with a timid and persuasive smile at his daughter, 'Papa reckons on his music, you know.'

'Go to school ! no, indeed, I'll not. Think of *me* going to be under baby rule ;—bed at eight, rise at six ; no, indeed ! I say so once for all.'

‘You are too hasty, dear,’ gently replied Mr. Gwynnham; ‘I do not wish, or intend you to go to school. The plan I have made for you is a very pleasant one. In asking if you were willing to go, I had but this thought—the parting, and this question—Can Maida leave her father?’

‘Oh, papa!’ was all the impetuous girl could answer, as she flung her arms around his neck and wept.

‘You are going, deary, to a first-rate London school, to be a parlour boarder. There you will have a room to yourself, and unless you choose, you need have nothing to say to any person but the masters appointed to attend you. Mrs. Bentley will kindly allow you to take your maid with you.’

A month from the date of this talk Mr. Gwynnham took Maida to London. His parting words were, ‘Let there be no secrets from your father, precious, our hearts have ever been one.’ His daughter appeared astonished; to her truthful soul such words were incomprehensible. Ah, poor Maida! you will understand them by-and-by! With much weeping they separated.

Ay, there may well be weeping! Father, thou art sending a treasure from thy bosom; will it ever lie there more? The star of thy hope will set in a fearful eclipse. Was it in a spirit of prophecy thou spakest those parting words? Didst thou

foresee that a creature so lovely as thy Maida would have temptations to strive with, and the tempter to baffle? And didst thou think to save her? Couldst thou look through time's far-seeing telescope, thou wouldst start at the blackened future before thy child. Thou wouldst see her noble purpose, her lofty heart, circumvented by a craft triumphant where strength had failed. We would fain hide from the father the sights this glass reveals. But you must peep in if you would know how Maida learnt the meaning of Mr. Gwynnham's words.

Look in. We cannot describe what the telescope shows, the task would be too painful. Look; there is Maida beaming her loveliest. Her eyes are radiant with joy, as she listens to a gentleman who is talking to her; what he says you cannot tell; there are those who know; let them tell who have learnt how to overcome artlessness with art.

Look again.

As a dissolving view the scene has changed, but the figures are the same. Maida is weeping. *Her* face depicts great mental agony—his face just such anxiety as a person would feel on seeing a long-sought treasure within hand-grasp.

Now a few sentences do reach your ear.

'But why should not I tell my father? You are withholding a joy from him; you cannot know him if you think he would deny me—he never

denied me anything; I *must* tell him, and *he* shall give me to you, Norwell.'

'No, he would not give you up, and you would be more miserable to do it after he had said nay. If he *is* so indulgent, he will forgive you. You shall have a letter written all ready to send directly the ceremony is over.'

You hear no more; the sound fades away with the view, which dissolves itself into a moonlight scene. A female in disguise leans on a gentleman's arm. They hurry by; you trace them to a railway station; they enter a first-class carriage. The whistle is loud, shrill enough to meet your ear; they are whirled off, and the station melts into an upper chamber. But one figure is there—a female; her black hair floats over her shoulders—her eyes glisten; you have seen those eyes before; they glisten, not now with radiant joy; there is a fire in them that you fancy must scathe the object it shall rest upon. A cup is in her quivering hand; you glance involuntarily towards a phial on the table; there is a label on the phial, and on the label there are cross-bones and a skull; beneath the skull is written, in large black letters, 'Poison.'

You shudder and turn to Maida; the cry of her childhood rings through your soul—'I will be loved! I must be loved!' and you long to say, 'I will love you, Maida; put down that fatal cup.' But she waits not your bidding. Her lips seem

to tremble forth a prayer; she dashes the cup from her with ‘I will be no coward, he shall see I *can* endure life!’

*You* must supply the blanks in Maida’s history; the blanks which these scenes leave. Happy are you if you cannot do so!

There is a grief to which sympathy would be a mockery. We may not enter the presence chamber of sorrow, and, going thence, reveal her confided secrets. There is but one voice that could console yon broken-hearted father; that voice will not humble itself to say, ‘I have sinned against heaven and before thee.’ So it shuns that desolate room, and the lonely mourner is left to drink his bitter draught in the darkness of mental night. His heart is sundered like a staff of office over a great man’s grave. Oh, wretched father! there was one who, like thee, had a cup of bitterness to drain to its last dreg. *His* agony fell as drops of slaughter to the earth. Raise thy spirit’s voice, and join with Him in that earnest cry, and the cry will bring its own relief. Some angel wing will be sent to lull thy weary, tempted soul to repose, and thou wilt no longer mourn alone.

Three years have fled by. The sights that glass revealed as Future, have for twelve months been the Past.

And Maida still lives on!



## CHAPTER III.

## CAPTAIN NORWELL.

At the door of an humble lodging-house, in a country town, stood a gentleman in military undress. He seemed turning in his mind whether to enter or not. After a moment's hesitation he advanced, and ascending the stairs, gently opened the door of a small third-storey room, where he perceived the object of his search—Maida Gwynnham, still beautiful—proudly beautiful, though in person the mere shadow of her former self. Captain Norwell soon found that sorrow had not dimmed the fire of her eye.

No word was spoken on either side. Maida seemed to ponder what course of reception to adopt; and Norwell, cowed by her haughty, unflinching stare, tacitly owned her superiority by waiting for her to break the unpleasant silence.

This while we will take the writer's and reader's privilege of turning past into present, and glance around the scantily-furnished apartment. A cradle stands by the chair from which Maida has

just started on seeing Norwell; and in the cradle sleeps a baby. On the floor, by the cradle, lies a heap of calico; a half-made shirt sleeve on the table explains this heap. In the farthest corner of the room is a loaf lying, as though it had rolled there by mistake, or had been made a plaything of. The cupboard tells us its own secret, by displaying, as the only occupant of its hungry shelves, an earthenware basin of tea-leaves.

But the silence breaks, we must back to the past. Would that all such scenes could be the Past!

‘Is *this* the way you receive me?’ at length said the Captain, perceiving that Maida chose to insist on the greater superiority of making him yield. ‘Is this the way you receive me, when I have travelled from London on purpose to see you?’

‘I did not ask you to come.’

‘No!’ replied Norwell, with a forced laugh. ‘No, I know that; my lady Gwynnham never asks, she only deigns to command. But why is this, Maida? Why did you not let me know of your distress?’

Maida stretched out her emaciated arm, and shaking her fingers, cried—

‘Look at these fingers—the skin just covers them. I have worked them to the bone in getting a morsel of bread for my child; for him I could do everything but beg.’

Breaking into a fearful smile, she added in an audible whisper ;—

‘For him I could do everything but beg—for him I could even steal! Do you see that loaf *there*, in the corner of the room? My boy was crying for food, and I had none to give him; the baker’s basket lay in a doorway, and I put out these fingers, worn to the bone (she shook them again)—I put them out and s-t-o-l-e! I rushed up stairs—my baby’s cry was hushed. I could not break the loaf. ’Twas like fire in my hand when his cry no longer fell like burning sounds on my heart, so I dashed the cursed thing across the room, and there it shall lie until those who have lost it come to claim it, and take me.’

‘But, Maida, you are rash and proud.’

‘I know I am, both.’

‘Do hear me. By telling me of your situation you would have avoided all this misery, and there would have been no begging in it.’

‘Had you wished, Norwell, to discover my circumstances, you would not have awaited appraisal from one who hates to complain. Eleven months would not have elapsed since last I heard of or from you.’

‘Don’t scold, there’s a darling,’ said Norwell, in a coaxing tone, ‘you love me still, don’t you?’

In a voice of stern gravity, Maida replied ;—

‘The hour of coaxing has passed. The last

three years have written a bitter truth upon my heart. I am no longer young in anything but years. The storms—the passions—the impulses—the cares—the sorrows that have swept over me, have left no summer traces, but such as the winter blast leaves upon the earth, in withered mockery of what has been. There is no spot in my career on which memory could love to rest. The darkness of the past could only be out-darkened by the dreaded future I discern before me.'

Norwell started at the prophetic words, and in real distress.

'Do not—Oh! do not, Maida, say so. If I had only thought, I might have known that *you* would call, asking even *me*—a degradation—and—'

'Norwell, I am ashamed! do you thus sum up my griefs? Do you suppose that the want of a few items of comfort has had to do with the lines furrowed on my cheek? Had hunger alone been my endurance, I had been a different person this day. You insult me in imagining that I condemn your unmanly silence, because—'

'You are impulsive, Maida, and fastidious. You—you—there is more of touchiness than sensitiveness in your feeling.'

Though Maida could not away with excuse, she could receive rebuke.

'Forgive me, Norwell! I fear you are right—I *do* become fastidious—impulsive I ever was;

would to heaven I —' She hesitated, and Norwell knew she stemmed the course of a pained thought rather than communicate the pain to him. Under the influence of a stirring impulse or provoked passion, Maida could lash the object of her anger with remorseless aim and almost cruel force ; but let that impulse be unmoved, that passion unprovoked, and she could not hurt the puniest worm. Had Norwell been what her delusion even yet believed, he would have invited the confidence of her overfraught heart—not by making her finish her half-uttered wish, but by relieving her of it ; for it was in his power to have supplied the words which would have at once eased her self-denying spirit, and showed her that he read those sorrows she sought to hide from him. No such thought, however, entered his mind ; he congratulated himself on Maida's self-control, which spared him perhaps another lashing—certainly a scene. Like most selfish men he hated that which is emphatically called *a scene*, partly from an indigenous dislike to all exhibitions having their rise in the holiest points of human nature, partly because he followed the usage of the day in scoffing at that regenerating flood which redeems half the world from savagery and egotism, (witness a mother's tears !) and chiefly, to use his own elegant explanation, because he felt it so confounded awkward to know how to look, what to do, or what to say on such occasions.

Ah, Norwell, school lies yet before you ; you have not only to view many scenes, but have to become an actor in them—be wise betimes and learn to like them.

‘ You love me still then ? ’ at last sighed Norwell.

The tear glistened in Maida’s eye, and he was answered. Once more her aching heart was soothed by perjured lips, whose specious words vowed lasting faith, and her parched spirit drank in the lying tale, surrendering itself to the cruel refreshment.

‘ But you are pale, Henry, very pale and haggard.’ She gazed anxiously at him.

‘ I am not well, Maida ; vexations of which you know nothing make my life a perpetual worry.’

‘ I *should* know them, then, Henry !’

A smile slightly reproachful and full of sadness accompanied this speech.

‘ Yes ! the chief at any rate you should know ; it for very shame has kept me so long absent from you, and still prevents me from publicly owning you. That alone is enough to account for my pale looks — other causes are spitefully superfluous. What say you ?’

How beautiful did pale looks thus accounted for become to Maida ! Trembling with suppressed affection, she replied :—

‘ That must not fret you ; I can wait till your father yields.’

‘Bore it! That may be heaven knows when. My father isn’t like yours, who’d forgive you if you’d let him, you little proud thing!’

A long time indeed must she wait if her union with Captain Norwell depends on the consent of a parent who exists not, save in the scheme of those perjured lips.

‘But I *can* and *will* wait, on the oft-repeated condition, that until then you consider me only—’ She stopped. Raising her eyes to Norwell, she exclaimed :—

‘O, Henry! Once have I fallen, need it be for ever? Can you not forget the past? forget all except that one day I may be yours by holier vows—’

‘Unless you wish to distract me altogether, don’t begin that. I’ll promise you anything if you will not forbid me to come to you, now I can again.’

‘Except on that condition, I must and *do* forbid, even should I never see you again, Norwell. You hear?’

‘I do! and suppose I must promise obedience, or my lady will extort it.’ There was lightness in his speech, but none in his voice. He was too well acquainted with Maida to dispute her objections. As she was still necessary to his plans, he sought, by awakening her sympathy, to divert her from a subject which might end adversely to himself.

‘I thought you wanted to relieve me of some of my troubles. I came here intending to unburden my mind ; but once here I lose myself in you, and *my* troubles in *your* distress. I look ill ? what does that face look ?’

‘Only what it deserves—never mind it. Tell me of yourself—let your griefs be mine, and if I can assist you—O, Henry ! need I tell you how wholly I am yours ?’

He smote his brow, and more pale and haggard seemed his countenance.

‘No, no ; tell me nothing, my own mad follies must bring their punishment. Why should I bother you who have already suffered so much for me ?’

‘By which suffering you are pledged to confide in me ; there is enough in your face now to make all that I have endured seem mere play.’

‘Ay, and there’ll be more there yet, unless I can procure help. Maida, my own noble one, will you believe me when I say that I have been innocent of neglect in leaving you so long ? A struggle against a tide of misfortune has—’

‘Henry, this suspense is cruel. Why torment me thus ? You have dreadful news to impart : be quick—and tell the worst.’

The moment had arrived. The prey quivered within hand-grasp. He then told her that his position was precarious. Pecuniary difficulties



pressed upon him so hardly, that where another week might find him, he would not harrow her tender feelings by hinting. He told of feverish excitements which sapped his life energies; of harassing vigils which might deprive him of reason. And when Maida inquired what assistance she could possibly render in adversities so hopelessly beyond her aid, Norwell answered that her affectionate participation in his sorrow was in itself an assistance; because it solaced his desponding spirits. On further inquiry he told her the most beggarly part of the trial was, that a mere trifle would relieve him.

To one long accustomed to deal in pence, the trifle of four hundred pounds appeared rather Brobdignaginal. Yet, as she could remember the time when such a sum would not have alarmed her, Maida was disposed to credit Norwell for sincerity in so viewing the amount required.

‘Is there no means of procuring the money, Henry?’

‘There is the very nuisance! The exact sum is promised me, but it doesn’t come. *Now* it would be salvation; by-and-by it will do more harm than good.’

A gleam of hope shone on Maida, before so dejected. Perceiving which, Captain Norwell exclaimed—

‘Yes; it’s only fair, since I have made you

partaker of my trouble, that you should share the slight hope which preserves me from sinking.'

Maida was all gratitude and eager attention while Norwell explained that the old uncle, of whom she had so often heard, had promised to send a cheque for four hundred pounds; but that he would obstinately take his leisure in sending it, which leisure might be the ruin of his nephew if prolonged beyond three days more. There was just a chance that the cheque might arrive to-morrow, Norwell having written to hurry the old gentleman.

Maida was now in a fit state of conflicting feeling to be left to follow out the train of thought her betrayer had laid. Her heart, balanced with delicate exactness between the points of suspense—hope—fear—it can work on by itself, advantageously, too, to Norwell. He therefore bade her farewell, solemnly engaging to bring her the result of the next post before nine o'clock A.M. to-morrow morning.

'Remember, if there *is* anything I can do, Henry,' she said, as he quitted the little room.

'Yes, yes; I'm up to you.' He waved his hand graciously and descended to the street; and Maida set herself to watch for an hour, distant by a whole night's length. But, to her surprise, ere nine o'clock of that evening, Norwell again showed himself. She saw immediately that something was

amiss, for he looked more gloomy than ever. Throwing himself down on the only chair, he flung a letter on the table.

‘Confound it! It is come, but it’s of no use. I *must* have four hundred or I’m a ruined man.’

A dismal silence succeeded. Maida once tried to speak, but Norwell impatiently hushed her. At last he started from his seat, enlivened by a bright thought, which presented a way of escape.

‘It is not without remedy, seeing it’s only an old man’s mistake. Yes; it can be done!’

Of course Maida brightened too: her smile was almost happy when Norwell said—

‘You wished to help me; now is the chance for you.’ Drawing a letter from his pocket-book, he handed it to her. ‘Read this. You see he here promises me *four* hundred; well, now read that cheque, on the table there. You see it is only for *one* hundred. What am I to do? Am I to be ruined by the old dotard?’

‘Certainly not; only don’t speak so. Write at once and get him to rectify the blunder. It is an odd one, though, to make.’

‘Not for a man of eighty, just in the flurry of starting for the Continent. As for writing to him, why, before I could receive an answer, I should be—ah! well, never mind where. At any rate it would be useless to write: he has left England by

this. We must act first and wake him up afterwards.'

Quite amused at the idea of waiting for his uncle's fidgets, Norwell burst into pretended anger.

'Oh! botheration take it. Wait for him, indeed, when I can remedy it myself.'

Maida asked how he proposed to do so.

'Nothing easier. We must alter the cheque to the amount intended. That's what I want you to do. A woman's touch is so much lighter than a man's. Look here.'

Taking the cheque, he seated himself at the table, and pointed with a pencil to the figures. 'As they are written, it will be easy to turn the *one* into a *four*: the distance readily admits it. See here; a little tail at the end of the one, a stroke through the tail, and it's done. The *spelt* figures are the plague.'

He scanned them thoughtfully, then continued: 'Twill do famously! See, the one is rather indistinct; put an F before it, there's room enough; and the tiniest touch to the e, and you have a pretty good four. The n is as much a u as an n, thanks to his penmanship.' He imagined Maida was following the pencil in its course over the cheque. Turning his head to make sure of her attention, he saw her standing erect, a look of horror depicted on her blanched features; her hand,

uplifted, had stayed itself half-way to her lips, a passion worked beneath that stricken exterior, but not a passion to vent itself in wrath.

‘Why, Maida!’

‘O, Norwell! do you too spurn me—and with such a request—this is misery.’

In well-affected surprise, Norwell put his arm around her.

‘You silly child; what tragedy nonsense is this? Listen to me, Maida.’

All truth herself—strangely enough, through the dark experience of more than two years—she had not learned to doubt her deceiver. She listened to his perjured voice, and the rigidity of her features relaxed, her hand reached its destination, and in an attitude of warning laid one finger on her lip. Norwell went on to say: ‘You may depend it’s all right, and that in his book uncle has placed four hundred against my name, or rather against this cheque. ’Tis not the first time he has made so doting a mistake. Excusable, too, poor old fellow; but that won’t save me. If *you* will not help me, I must do it myself. I’m not going to founder for his forgetfulness. Of course *I* shall write at once and tell him what we’ve done, and he’ll be glad enough.’

‘*We*, Henry?’

‘Not unless you choose; but if you will not, I must. Your hand would be better than mine,

though; it would make the alteration more perfect.'

'If all this be true, I can discover no necessity for disguise. I understand you do not wish to keep it secret.'

Falsehood is ever petulant over if's. Truth alone can stand the test of the subtle monosyllable.

'It is more fun than I expected,' said Norwell, with a vexed laugh. 'Secret! no; but, you silly puss, however much my uncle meant four hundred, the bank will not pay a sum disagreeing with the cheque. His intentions must be in black and white, or they can't be cashed—they'd be cashiered if you please. Or if the figures showed signs of alteration, there would be an immediate fuss to be sure, though that would be of no consequence except for the delay. A word from Nice would stop their righteous qualms in a moment.'

'Well, but—'

'Now, dear, trust me, I know what I'm about;' (so does Satan when he plants thorns in God's narrow way;) 'the only point to be decided is—will you do it, or will you not?—the money I must have; there is no time for debate.'

No, if he stay to debate, Maida's impulse may decline; he remembers she is impulsive.

'I do not understand money matters,' she sighed, resting her eyes trustfully on Norwell. 'If you assure me there is no harm, I will try my best.'

‘What harm *can* there be, when it’s from my own uncle? see, here is his name; he’ll be annoyed enough when he finds what a trick he has served me. Under a similar error would you not do the same by your father, if you were hard up for money?’

‘Doubtless—but he is one of a thousand.’

‘And may not my uncle be one of a million?’

His voice was so earnest, his manner so open, Maida could no longer hesitate; the cloud that had transiently obscured her lover rolled off, and all was fair. Another trusting look.

‘Mind, then, I lean on *you*!’

Poor Maida! thy pierced hand too soon shall feel the rottenness of the reed thou dependest on. Would God thy hand could premonitorily smart to warn and save thy soul the barbèd arrow there concealèd. No, no; the reed is whole to sight—substantial, strong, and ready—it were wrong to doubt it.

Oh, Norwell, Norwell! canst thou let those confiding, loving eyes rest upon thee thus, without a blush thrilling thy very soul? Yes. How-muchsoever his cheek may flush, a gambler cannot blush. The scarlet tide of anger or riot may flow, but it nears not that gentler stream ebbing from its home, the heart—to proclaim its existence by the outward and visible sign—a blush.

Maida sat at the table and Norwell bent over her directing her pen.

‘There—will that do?’ she cried, pushing the cheque forward and herself back with the satisfied air of one who has accomplished a difficult task.

‘Will it do, Henry?’

‘Bravo! old Rogers himself will be deceived.’

‘*Deceived!* Henry?’

‘Oh, any word you like will suit me.’ His tone was cheerful—there was no deception in it—she was content.

‘Now, then, you must sign your name at the back. No, what am I talking about? I am as much Martha Grylls as you. What a lark it is that he always will give a name of his own composure, as the clerk is said to have said—my name isn’t fit to appear on paper I suppose.’

Maida was puzzled until, taking up the cheque, she observed that it was payable to a Martha Grylls or order. Norwell explained that it was a whim of his uncle to trump up all the odd names he could think of; whether to make him laugh, or because he objected to have two Norwells on one paper, he could not tell.

‘However, he never honoured me with the feminine gender before. I’m afraid I shall not do justice to the sex. Let’s see, Martha Grylls had better write his or her name at the back; then I, Captain Norwell, shan’t be the fair possessor of the melodious title in presenting the cheque for payment.’



Maida smiled, while he took up the pen, as if to write the name; he flourished his fingers a few times and then said,

‘Well, perhaps you had better do it. I may not write Martharish enough for the personage. Here; just along there, you are more Martha Grylls than I.’

‘The M. G. is *very* like your writing, Henry,’ she remarked in handing him back the note.

‘Now I have become Martha Grylls, I rather like it, it is so peculiar.’

This was spoken playfully. Why did Norwell gaze so sadly on her? Why turn with a face so full of misery as folding the cheque in his pocket-book, he met her large eye fixed fondly on him and heard her almost gleeful voice—

‘Now, thank God, you are all right! Now, naughty boy, go and renovate that pale face.’

But the face is perverse, it grows paler, paler still; more haggard draw the lines of care; she fears he is ill—his manner is so unwonted when he hurriedly bids her good night in a stifled utterance. ‘It is the reaction of his sorrow,’ she says, settling herself to a visionary watch of him who still possesses her heart’s true worship. Ah! devoted woman, the wrench which tears thee from thine idol is one of crafty might, or it could not succeed.

When Norwell reappeared the next morning, his unrefreshed countenance and listless gait bespoke

a sleepless night. Maida was grieved and disappointed. The money had not cured him. What else could she do for him? He was too unwell to ride to the neighbouring town. Would she object to go for him to get the cheque cashed at his uncle's bank? He would stay with the brat during her absence. She did not object—if they would pay her, she would be delighted to go for him. Might the shabbiness of her dress make them hesitate to give her the money? Dear no; who could doubt her authenticity as a gentlewoman, or, if they did, they dare not refuse payment at his uncle's own bank. She accordingly set off in the mail, and reached her destination just before the bank closed for the day. Some question from the clerk drew forth the reply that she had written the signature at the back.

‘Then you are Martha Grylls, ma’am?’

Maida smiled, she could not help it; she was so amused at her new name. The clerk thought she smiled at his asking her if she was herself: so he politely said; ‘We are obliged to be particular, ma’am.’ And it passed off. Martha Grylls left the bank, and took her place in an omnibus, the only conveyance going to —— that afternoon. She anxiously watched for passengers, dreading to be alone with so large a sum of money. At last the door opened, and a hard-featured, red-visaged man plumped down by her, and he proved her sole com-

panion. When they got into the high road this man began to talk to her in an unbecoming way, on which Maida insisted that he should remove from her side, and when he refused to comply, she called to the conductor, and requested his interference; which being lent, Bob Pragg was obliged to change seats, in doing which he vowed a vengeful oath at 'the vixen who could'nt speak pleasant to a fellow-traveller.'

When the omnibus stopped at the little inn, a mile and a half from her home, a gentleman approached and spoke to the driver, who forthwith put his head in at the door, and asked Maida her name. 'Grylls,' she instantly replied, fearing to give her own name lest the inquirer should be an emissary of her father; but he was only a husband on the look-out for an expected wife. Grylls was nothing to him so he turned away. Bob Pragg, however, chose to comment on it, by remarking, 'That there name was ugly enough for such a spitfire as she there;' and then chuckling over the notion he repeated, 'Grylls—Grylls,' till he had got the word by heart. Unable to tell why—Maida felt sorry he had got hold of the name. 'Yet why?' she said; 'it is a mere freak. I may never hear it again.' Was it the malice of an evil spirit that persevered in whispering it into her ear? as the omnibus rumbled on, she could not deafen herself to an only voice which kept on—

‘Grylls! — Martha Grylls!—ah-h-h! Martha Grylls!’

They finally stopped at another inn, a half-mile distant from her lodgings. On descending, Bob Pragg offered her his arm.

‘A feller’s a catch this time o’ night; better let me see you safe home.’

Maida thought it best to receive this suggestion politely, so she answered; ‘I have only to go to —, I am not afraid to walk alone, thank you.’

‘You live *there*, do you? I’ll call upon you when you’re in a jollier temper—good-bye, Mrs. Grylls.’

Taciturn to sullenness sat Norwell. The yellow heap before him aroused him not. Maida intreated him to tell her what further ailed him; but he shook off her importunities until the night was far advanced. He then sprang to his feet with a suddenness that made her tremble; turning upon her he cried,

‘It is no use to hide it. Without a great sacrifice, I’m a dead man.’

‘What sacrifice is there I would not make for you, Henry? my love has never failed. I could do anything but sin for you.’

‘And you could’nt do that? What, then, if I tell you, you have sinned already!’ His eye rested piercingly on her. ‘Maida, I am about to sift your love for me.’

A prompt smile would have signified her willingness to be sifted, had not the deep solemnity of Norwell's voice betrayed unusual meaning. She clasped her hands but spoke not: his voice increased in solemnity.

‘Maida, the time has come! Do you love me, or do you *not*? must henceforth be answered in action. Do you know what you have done?’

‘No! what? explain, and quickly.’

‘We—have—committed—forgery,’ deliberately hissed Norwell; ‘and it is too late to retract, unless you would hurl me into hell—for this pistol goes through my heart the instant you decide against me. There—Maida Gwynnham, I am in your hands; kill me if you choose.’

There was a fearful silence in that little upper chamber. The fiercest tempest of wrath, the keenest lightning flash—break forth, rather than that cold, dead, stillness. Norwell quailed beneath the dilated gaze that moved not—yet fixed on him — while she who fixed it stood breathless, pale, and chill, as though her life-springs had been touched with ice.

‘Speak, Maida, oh! speak to me.’

No answer came.

A gradual change overspread her face—pitying scorn was depicted there. Another change—revenge sat brooding there. Again a change, and anger recoloured her pallid cheek. Yet once more

a change. Her features compressed. The colour went back to the smitten heart, and firm determination was written on her face—her mind was resolved; her voice calm.

‘Will it save *you*?’

‘Why, why, it shall not get you into a scrape.’

‘Do not lie; will it save you?’ the same calm voice.

‘Yes: if you choose it will save me; otherwise—’

The pistol clicked and supplied the blank.

‘I am in your power, Maida.’

‘And I in yours?’ quietly and unwisely asked she.

But Norwell, too agitated to note the question in its advantageous view, merely replied—

‘Why, no, hardly that, because you could implicate me.’

‘I would leave that to Captain Norwell,’ sneered Maida. ‘Yes, to *you*, Henry. The scales have fallen from my eyes; I see it all too late, as, too late, I have discovered you. Detection is possible: your *hand* did not commit the forgery; your fame must not be touched, it stands too high; but Maida Gwynnham, that outcast! it matters not how low her fall: a meet resting-place is she for scorn and infamy.’

Norwell’s agonized expression met her in its abject helplessness; it softened her, and tenderly passionate she pleaded.

‘Oh, Henry! for you I have already sacrificed all that a woman’s pride holds dear; for you I can go on with the sacrifice—yes, even to perdition. But *must* it be? Is there no other test wherewith to try my love? None but this, that will also embrace you in its scathing grasp? For, Henry, I love you enough to suppose that you could never more be happy were you thus to ruin a fellow-creature. For yourself, your own peace, I plead; for myself I care not; to live to suffer for you would be to live to some purpose; yet cannot you destroy that fatal purpose? Destroy it, Norwell. I know the pangs of that gnawing worm, remorse, and would fain tear its ruthless fang from your bosom, even to plant it in mine own for ever. Norwell! dear Henry! be persuaded.’

He was charmed to the spot; she had never looked more wildly beautiful; it was destruction to gaze at her; he must yield to the impassioned pleader; another minute, and his guilty plan had been borne a blasted breath upon the wind, and his lips, eased of their load of sin, had promised repentance. He withdrew his eyes. ‘Your debt, Norwell, your debt!’ whispered the tempter. Still spoke the eloquent features: ‘Dear Henry, reclaim your purpose.’ ‘Disgrace, prison, death,’ urged the tempter. Still outspoke the eloquent features: ‘Do, Henry; dear Henry, *do*!’ There

was a time when she would have added, 'For *my* sake;' but that time was now traditional. The mental struggle continued. The tempter laid an official tap on the shoulder of his imagination;—he gave a startled cry; the purpose lay safe within his heart.

'Be it so,' cried Maida.

'Oh, Maida! can you make the sacrifice?'

'If *you* can, Norwell; there lies the bitterness to me.'

'Oh! do not, do not speak so! Pity, pity poor weak-minded Norwell, who cannot bear the finger of shame. *I* am the object of pity, not *you*. Your lofty nature may find happiness in vicarious suffering, but for me what is there?'

'It need not, *shall* not be.'

'It *must*, Maida; would you betray me?' his fingers played on the pistol.

'Not whilst I can suffer in your stead. Go, Henry, you have nothing to fear from me. The sin, mine by carelessness, shall become mine by substitution; for I see no other way to save you from punishment.'

'And from death. I would not live a second after disgrace. Oh, Maida! be this your support—you save a soul from death.'

She shuddered; she longed to be alone, and beckoned Norwell to leave; he was not sorry to do so; it was hazardous to remain in her presence. Not venturing another look, he said—



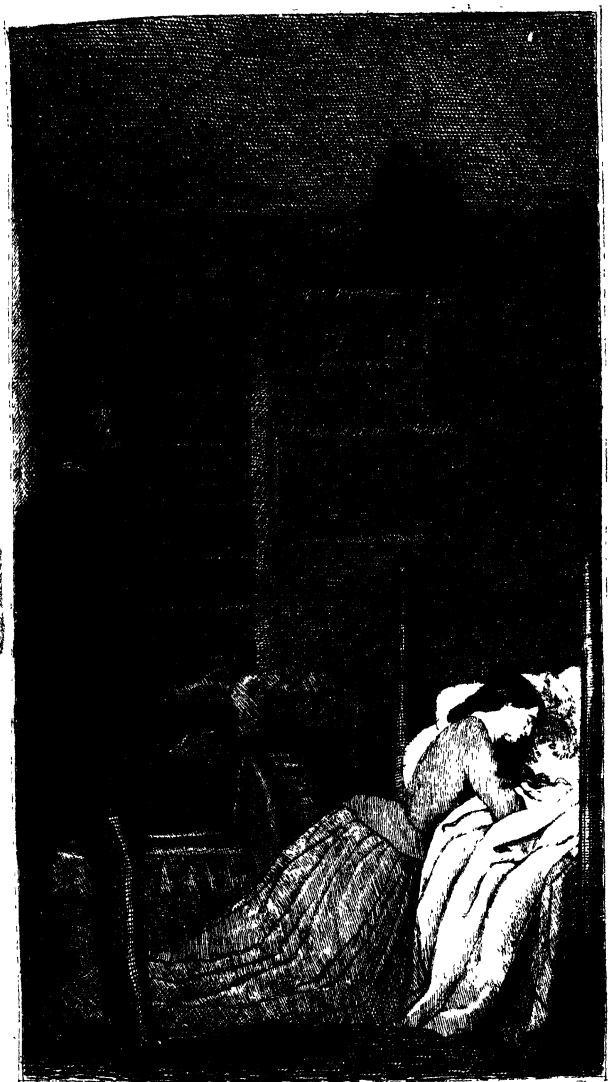
‘Then I am in your hands: my life is yours, to spare or slay.’

‘I committed the forgery; let that suffice you, Norwell.’

The door slammed on him and he was gone.

‘I am a felon!’ thought Maida, and she recoiled from herself, as though the brand of infamy already burned on her; then dropping on her knees, she cried, ‘O God! lay not this sin to my charge—it is to save one dearer than my life. Do Thou acquit me, and I can bear the lot of shame.’

‘We must do Captain Norwell the justice to say, his steps were lighter than his heart that night; and ere day broke he was striving to forget his compunctions in a hurried journey to London, whither we shall not follow him—we must return to desolated Maida, until he again shall force himself on our unwilling attention.’





## CHAPTER IV.

## THE FELON.

THE night seemed very long, yet all too swiftly it sped for the watcher, who sat silently counting the heavy sighs, which one by one doled out an infant's life. The heavings were fearfully audible—up, down, up, down, fainter, fainter, and the long night seemed longer still, yet all too short for the weary watcher. The clock had struck one; two hours more, and still that heaving breath alternately drew hope from the mother's soul, and sent a swift fear through it. There was a feeble smile upon the baby's parted lips; Maida listened; the world for another breath, though it snatch the last hope from her bleeding heart. But the little breast lay still, the snowy linen covering it heaved not; the lips were still disparted in a half-formed smile.

‘He cannot be gone!’

Yes, poor Maida! henceforth thou art lonely. That smile was life's quittance-gate; the sigh that

passed through it bore thy child to heaven. Lonely Maida !

The morning light shimmered coyly through the closed pane, and fell upon a lovely pair—death in its reality, cold, but void of mockery; life in its unreality, cold, and brimful of subtle mockery, drooped together on that couch. But for the low, tearless sob which broke at intervals from Maida, you would have thought that she, too, shared the kind reality of death. She knelt by the couch, resting her face on the baby's pillow; her hair fell like a pall over the little corpse, and strikingly the chill pallor of death looked up from the sable covering.

The clock had struck five—still Maida bent over the little sleeper, unconscious that she was overlooked by Norwell, who had ascended the stairs without noise. Horror-stricken he stood at the door. He came to impart direful news; but news and everything were forgotten as this sight of sorrow burst upon him. Gazing at the beautiful personification of solitary grief, he thought—

‘What have I done? Where is the bosom upon which this bereaved mother should be weeping? Can I be so base as to make her a further sacrifice? No, I will not! Every self-interest shall be rather sacrificed to *her*—my poor Maida!’

Nay, turn thy pity on thyself, Norwell; save thy pity for that moment when thy just resolves,

now really meant, pass not into effect, but into *air* with the first smile that shall pacify the accusing voice thus questioning within thee.

For some time Norwell remained a spectator only of the scene, so touching in its passiveness, so heartrending in its reality. He then advanced on tiptoe to the bed, and, stooping over the kneeling form, whispered—

‘Maida, it is I; look at me, dear.’ A tear sparkled in his eye.

Her lids languidly unclosed, and the purple depths which lay beneath fixed unknowingly on him. The tear that a minute before quivered on his lash rested on Maida’s cheek: that tear was worth the world; to repay it she felt she could give a life of suffering. Oh, Maida Gwynnham, we remember not a tear, but tears, ‘real tears,’ that fell like burning kisses on thy cheek; have they been blotted from thy memory? Oh, God! that they had! comes Maida’s answer. Her eyes again unclosed. One flash darted, as if from beneath their dreamy depths, showing that the fierceness of their fire had been more than equal to the test of many waters. One flash they gave, but not the lightning flash which blasts: it was the kindling glance of love untold, triumphant over pain.

She remained seemingly unconscious for a time; then suddenly starting to her feet, and pressing

her clenched hand on her heart, as if to keep down by force the choking emotion which was swelling there, she exclaimed—

‘Norwell, what brings you—bad news?’

With the eagerness with which Maida spoke, Norwell gave his former resolutions to the wind. Not appreciating, or perhaps not recognising, that secret power by which a noble nature can turn from its own misery to assist another in distress, he thought that he had felt more for Maida than she felt for herself, and hastily replied—

‘Bad news indeed for me, unless you stand steadfast.’

The old look of withering scorn shot across her, but she subdued it, and slowly and very calmly responded—

‘Once more and for ever I repeat I am yours for life. Oh, would it were for death!’

‘She stepped to the bed, and, with a delicacy lost upon Norwell, drew a fair linen kerchief over the corpse. Many women would have used the stiffening finger of death as a last means of pointing ‘shame’ to their deceiver. Maida covered it, lest it should even do so unawares. She would not occupy the vantage-ground offered her by the mighty champion. She stood upon a loftier ground, an unapproachable elevation, at which her opponent could only stare in impotent wonder.

Oh, Maida! how great had been thy power

hadst thou occupied that eminence in the character for which Nature so nobly formed thee! Hadst thou shone thence a living invitation to the paths of peace, who could have resisted thine appeal? Still exquisite in ruin thou must crown the summit, but it will be as a haunted grandeur, on which men gaze with awe, and, hurrying by, hint of a darkened past.

Returning to his side, she very quietly asked—

‘Bad news you say, Norwell? I am ready to hear and ready to act.’

‘Then they are on us, Maida,’ hurriedly returned the Captain, the danger of his situation vividly presenting itself to his hitherto beclouded senses; ‘it is all discovered, and,’ wiping the large drops fast gathering on his forehead, ‘I fear they have a clue to me, for *you* they are in full cry.’

‘They need raise no cry, for I shall not lead them a chase; but you, oh! *you*, Norwell, must and *shall* be saved.’

Norwell’s great anxiety seemed to be to talk on as fast as possible in order to prevent certain questions presenting themselves to Maida’s mind—questions that, debased as he was, he trembled to face. As yet it was evident she dreamt not of treachery. Her baby’s illness had not allowed her to ponder the bearings of the case; it had never occurred to her that without some deep-laid scheme of cunning and crime her name could not be asso-



ciated with the forgery. Had it occurred she would have discarded the thought as a horrible romance of imagination. Norwell had not prepared her beforehand for the blow he was about to strike, fully believing that it would be unnecessary to deal it. He made every arrangement for it, but at the same time hoped it might be uncalled for, the alteration in the cheque having been perfect. 'Why, then,' said he, 'alarm her and make her abhor me for a sin I may not commit?' so he trusted an explanation to the last minute, to the infinite peril of letting Maida hear, from the evidence brought against her, how she had been victimized. Her moral courage and presence of mind might bear her through; but Norwell doubted whether her indignant surprise or impulsive spirit would pass the cruel ordeal without revealing a discrepancy to the keen-eyed barrister.

'These hands committed the act,' quietly said Maida. 'I shall acknowledge *that* and no more.'

'Noble! generous!' —

A scuffle down stairs arrested the Captain's eulogy and Maida's impatience.

'We are lost!' feebly ejaculated Norwell.

Maida placed herself in a defiant position. The dismay was needless. A drunken man had reeled into the house and was inclined to dispute his ejection—this had been the noise. It had, however, the effect of arousing Norwell to the necessity

of speed in bringing this interview to a conclusion.

‘One word and I must be off; should I be caught with you it would be all over with me—it will be a pleasure to your noble dis——’

‘Cowering coward,’ murmured Maida, ‘have done with flattery.’

‘Well, then, be careful what you say—when you are apprehended be silent—when obliged to speak weigh well your words, or you—you will betray me.’

Maida shuddered.

‘Now haste away, you have been here too long already. I am prepared for them;’ and then, as if repeating her lesson, she whispered—

‘*I*—did—it! they will only get those three words from me.’

Norwell was half down stairs when he returned, took Maida’s hand, and looking anxiously at her, said—

‘Maida, you will hear strange things. I have been hurried on to a point I never thought I could reach.’

‘Go, Norwell—go.’ He obeyed but again came back.

‘Maida, your punishment will be heavy—it may be——’

‘Transportation for life!’ calmly added Maida.

‘And *I* a man—O Maida! Try, *do* try to escape. I will aid you. I will go with you.’

Again he descended and again he returned.

‘Do you—can you forgive me? Can you think in any other way of me than as a cowardly wretch?’

‘I can think of you as a martyr!’ Norwell understood the searching tone.

‘Perhaps we have met for the last time,’ he exclaimed, as the door closed upon him.

The reader will remember that they met once more.

Left by herself, Maida stood irresolute. The bare possibility of implicating Norwell was a poignant thought. She bit her lips as if already refusing to answer some wily questor.

‘What is it?’ she cried, ‘what is it? this feeling *here* that tells me I have a dreadful something to recollect?’

She started from a deep reverie with the air of one who wakes to a yet oblivious sense of an impending sorrow.

‘What is it? Oh! what is it?’ Her eyes fell upon the bed, and she was answered. She gazed wildly around the room.

‘They will take my babe from me, and I have not even wept over it! No! the scalding drops are fevering my brain, but they will not come forth. My babe! my child!’ she continued, in the thrilling accents of despair, ‘the last comfort is denied thy wretched mother—she may not lay thee in thy grave.’

‘Why not?’ she quickly added, ‘they are not here yet. The morning is yet early—no one is astir. Who will miss Maida Gwynnham’s child?’ She stole on tip-toe to the bed.

Poor Maida! there is no creature near. No eye is on thee but *one*, and that is full of pity, erring and sinful as thou art.

She waited not for a second thought, but hastily descended the stairs bearing her unconscious burden wrapped in the accustomed shawl. About half a mile distant lay a lovely unfrequented spot. Maida had often wished to rest her own weary head there. With a palpitating heart thither she bent her steps: every sound made her start. The fugitive flying from the blood avenger could not have glanced more trembling behind. But Maida’s fears were not for herself.

‘Another hour and some rough grasp might tear thee from me, my precious babe, and thou wouldst have a tearless grave—now thy own mother will lay thee down, how tenderly!’

The morning was calm and bright—there was that mysterious silence around that is only made the more impressive by the faint sounds which occasionally disturb it. The very birds had hushed their cheery carols as though they knew that songs of mirth fall heavily upon a burdened mind. Was it the still small voice which spoke to Maida in that gentle scene—the voice which she refused to hear

in the stormy blasts that had desolated her haughty spirit? for she wept. Placing her babe upon the turf, she clasped her hands and looking upwards, exclaimed—

‘Oh, God! Thou hast made everything pure and beautiful. Canst Thou look on *me*, the only evil here? Oh, God! if this be sin, forgive it for the sake of Him whose name I have forfeited to utter.’

Courage, Maida! thou hast breathed a prayer, and prayer was never yet denied, how long soever delayed the answer. It is stored for thee in Heaven’s golden treasury, and yet must yield its plentiful harvest. She knelt and tried the mould. It was soft and crumbly, readily giving to her touch. There was a rustle in the bushes. She peered cautiously around. Nothing was to be seen. She continued her labour—another rustle—she sprang to her feet—all was quiet again. She had removed the earth about a foot’s depth when a shout was heard. A man leaped from the hedge and clutched her arm.

‘Halloo, missus! I’ve a watched you this quarter hour—just to be *sure* what you’re up to—if this yer an’t seeing with one’s own eyes, I’m blastered!’

Maida stretched her hand towards the child; the man laid his upon it.

‘This yer’s our article, if you please, missus. By Jingo! you’re an old hand. Here we’ve been after you for one thing—a bit o’ paper business—

and we catches you up to another that beats t'other all hollow, or I ain't Bob Pragg.'

Here two constables appeared, and with a look of disapprobation at the ruffianly man, desired him to desist. Then quietly taking Maida's arms, they requested her to accompany them.

'Take up the child, Watkins,' said the elder constable, whispering, as the other obeyed, 'Any signs or marks of violence?'

Bob Pragg, who seemed in his glory, and most importunate to appropriate to himself a share in the arrest, replied aloud,

'None as *I* sees for, and nothing' susceptible about. Pizin, p'raps;' he winked mysteriously to the men.

'We'll thank you to mind your own business, Mr. Pragg,' returned Watkins; 'you've showed us the woman, and you've nothing more to do with her. Go forward. When you're wanted you'll be summoned. Go forward! Go forward!'

Bob Pragg misunderstanding this 'go forward,' took it as a personal insult, and went forward with an air of injured prerogative, grumbling the while to his hob nails—

'They gets all they can out of a feller, and then keeps the game to 'emselves.'

His eyes glistened when Watkins drew a pair of handcuffs from his pocket, and as quickly fell when the other constable beckoned.

‘No, no, Watkins, she’s quiet enough;’ then speaking aloud, as a hint to Maida,

‘We only uses them for fractious parties.’

The hint, however, was thrown away. Maida heard it not; she was, as the senior constable had said, quiet, fearfully quiet. A ghastly disdain sneered from every feature.

Had her anguish been less, she had raved on them such a storm as her spirit alone knew how to raise. But could one word have created a thunderbolt to destroy her persecutors, no word would have formed upon those parched and paralysed lips. The men, Pragg excepted, were awed by the statue-like presence before them, and inclined to show her what respect they consistently could.

‘Now, missus, we’ll onways, if you please, and so long as your bidable, we’ll make you as comfortable as circumstances permits’ (a grin from Bob Pragg). ‘We never acts disrespectful before we’re obliged. Now, Mr. Pragg, mind yourself, if you please.’

Watkins lifted the dead body, and, wrapping it in the shawl, carried it bundle-wise under his arm. Even this irreverence failed to attract Maida’s attention. She was revolving some yet unfathomed mystery, or moulding some plan that yielded not readily to her wishes.

By an interchange of expressive nods, the constables had remarked Maida’s start when they exa-

mined the corpse for marks of violence, and had noted it as a proof of guilt.

Ay, she had started, and with the start an intrepid thought had rushed into her mind—a thought whose purpose was to place Captain Norwell beyond reach of danger, because it should place her at the bar of justice in a different position of guilt.

‘I have it!’ she at last exclaimed; and a smile of triumph illumined her face. Then the old look of firm resolve stamped its awful though silent fiat upon her countenance. The mystery was explained, the plan moulded, the intrepid thought grappled with; that smile of triumph defied each one.

Arrested for forgery under the alias of Martha Grylls, Maida Gwynnham was indicted at the next assizes for the wilful murder of her child, the bill of indictment for forgery being held subservient to the more terrible charge of murder.

In Maida’s cupboard was found a bottle that awakened vivid suspicions against the prisoner. It was produced in court, and a shiver ran through the audience as from the skull and cross-bones the dreadful word ‘poison’ with unmistakeable distinctness bore witness to the alleged guilt.

Some laudanum found in the baby corroborated the testimony of the label on the phial.

Now comes the explanation of that smile that



broke (a gleam of sunshine) from the disdainful gloom of Maida's face. A word to the wise is sufficient for them. The interpretation, therefore, shall lie in the facts—that the same exultant smile burst forth when the foreman of the jury gave verdict—

‘We find Martha Grylls guilty of the wilful murder of her child.’

And that, if possible, a still more victorious smile shone on the judge's declaration—

‘Having been found guilty of the higher crime, which I shall sentence to the full rigour of the law, it were useless to urge the lesser charge against Martha Grylls.’

Then with solemn pathos, amidst the breathless hush of the Court, the judge drew the fatal symbol on his head, and pronounced the death warrant, which was received by the Court with one prolonged sob of smothered feeling, and welcomed by Maida Gwynnham as the benediction after a tedious sermon.

## CHAPTER V.

BOB PRAGG.

A CASE of circumstantial evidence invariably creates a deep sensation in the public mind. The contest between opposing counsel is never so exciting, never is the battle so fiercely fought, so barely won, as when circumstantial evidence throws down the gage.

Not born and bred to the strife, juries hate a case of circumstantial evidence. There are so many sleepless nights after a 'guilty' verdict, so many dream-distorted sleeps, that they would rather buy themselves off the list fifty times over than incur a seat in the box.

Maida Gwynnham's trial aroused a far-spread interest. It was pre-eminent in every conversation. It was tiraded in tavern and tap, canvassed in coffee-room and club, and preached from pulpit and press. One clergyman made it a glowing fulfilment of the ancient prophecy—'Be sure your sin will find you out.' Wonderful to tell, and contrary to usage in such themes of common

interest, opinion unanimously agreed with the verdict. No one dissenting voice laid its useless veto on the judgment. The case was clear as daylight (Query, is daylight always clear?). The prisoner's guilt undoubted. The whole course of evidence had but one bearing. The most prejudiced could not question the decision. There need be no sleepless nights, no disturbed dreams, for the most fastidious jurist after this trial. Had but a solitary circumstance broken down, there would have been a gap for a doubt. Had but one fact proved fractious, that one fractious fact would have kicked the whole evidence on the head, and triumphantly borne off the accused, giving the populace an opportunity of chorussing with a loud 'amen' the learned counsel's earnest admonition to the jury—

‘If the prosecution has left a doubt upon your mind, in God's name give the prisoner the benefit of it.’

But as no circumstance broke down, as no fact proved fractious, the *vox populi* sent its ‘amen’ aloft, one-voiced, applauding the same learned counsel's solemn warning—

‘If, on the other hand, the evidence brings conviction to your mind, let no earthly consideration prevent you from doing justice. Your country demands it of you. The rising generation demands it of you. Your God demands it of you.’

Justice is God's work, and you are His ministers to enforce it.'

'Amen!' shouted Bob Pragg, from the depths of his heart. He had been subpœnaed as witness, and now smoked the pipe of content over the satisfactory result of his witness-ship. He sat in a public-house of the worst description, and was surrounded by a set of men looking sufficiently suspicious to claim him as their chief. They were celebrating Bob's feats in the witness-box with a treat of drink from the witness money.

We shall have much to do with Mr. Pragg before we finish with him, therefore we may as well make his acquaintance now, as he is in a better temper than usual.

Bob is oracular in speech, wink, and inuendo. His opinions will have more weight if we first learn that experience renders him capable of forming an opinion, and misguided talent of subverting one. It is not impossible that years ago he should have been what is called '*good-looking*, now he is emphatically *bad-looking*. Unpleasant thoughts of apoplexy are suggested by his short, thick neck. He is a walking (not Walker's) dictionary, with illustrated meanings of the whole list of words beginning with Hard. Hardiness, hard-hearted, hard-favoured, line his forehead. Hardware is in every inch of the man, and all other hards are to be found in this living page.

You can never cry, 'Tisn't here !' with him before your eyes.

Pragg had given many mysterious winks, but they had fallen innocuous on the lethargic perceptions of his companions. At last, knocking out the ashes of his pipe with an energy that sent its bowl into the fire and a start into his sleepy mates, he enthusiastically exclaimed—

'It was the cleanest bit of business I ever seed !'

'After the old game again, Bob ?'

'Eigh ! I shan't forget it in a hurry. Clean slap off like *that* ain't every-day work, I'll promise you. I've 'tended 'sizes all my life,' (we know that, Bob, you needn't tell us in what particular character,) 'and never heard anything to bate this. I'm very curious in cir'stantial evidence—got a dozen cases pat at my fingers' ends—but this yer woman's takes the glaze out of 'em all. Nothing but cir'stantial evidence for *me* after this.'

'How so, Bob ?'

Bob only answered by a wink, which he intended should mean a great deal, and proceeded. 'Be blastered, if it didn't convince Grylls herself a'most ! Beau-ti-ful !'

And the amateur-like admiration of Bob was delightful, as, with upcast eyes and twitching chin, he repeated—

'Beau-ti-ful ! I say, man. Grylls herself couldn't stand such evidence. If the woman

didn't look foul at herself 'fore 'ceedings was over I b'ant Bob Pragg. No one could resist it. The facts—there they was, cut out and fitted into one th'other for all the world as if they was true. There wern't one stretcher; not a single lump that could stick in his Lordship's throat. How glorious! the whole batch—judge, ranters, and humbugging twelve, swallowed it smooth down without a wry mouth; and then to hear his Lordship's speech after gulping the dose! Grace after meat wern't nothing to it!

'To see 'en shake his hand to heaven and tell how vengeance always tracks a feller's secret steps, blastered if it wern't most a pity to throw away such a sermint.'

'What on earth be after, Bob, d'ye think they were all sold?'

'Head over heels, man!' chuckled Bob; 'there wern't no more truth in any of them blessed statements nor there is in *you*' (Bob was always sarcastic).

His hearers were fairly roused, and Stuckey suggested, 'That's only what you believes, not what you *knows*, Pragg.'

'Catch me,' winked Bob; 'b'lieving is knowing with me. Bob Pragg, Esq., don't easy b'lieve what he don't know.'

A sceptical shake of the head from Stuckey.

'Look'e here, man, this is the go. They b'lieves

a thing, and *then* sees it as clear as moonshine. *I* sees a thing as clear as sunshine; then, and not till then, I b'lieves. Faith without sight ain't Bob Pragg's religion. They b'lieves that Grylls is a thumper—so pat before their blessed eyes facts goes to make her one—a ready-made murderer, caught in the very act, jumps up before 'em. But all the facts in creation couldn't make me see a murderer in that woman. So, as I don't *see*, I won't b'lieve.'

'An old sweetheart, eh! Pragg?'

The *subject* was an old sweetheart! Only answering the insinuation by a nod, Pragg continued—

'I learns by 'xperience. She an't the right sort for murder. She's pluck enough, but no natturl relish that way. You sees that in her eye, that looks straight out on a body; no this ways and that ways with her. She'd do for herself in a jiffy, if needs be, or she'd fight like a tiger for a feller in distress' (feller doesn't always mean a male); 'but she'd never lay a finger on a helpless mortal, much less on her own hincient baby. They're all wrong from top to toe, or I a'nt Bob Pragg.'

'Then shame on it, I cries! Why on earth did you stand there with your lies all 'gainst an innocent fellow creature; and she a woman, and a beauty too?'

‘Not a lie in the whole blessed matter,’ coolly replied Bob. ‘There’s the beauty of cir’stantial evidence. Truth every farthing of it; but every ha’p’oth confounded falsity. I stood there, man, to tell what I was paid for—~~felling~~ facts, not to give ’em my thoughts, that wasn’t wanted nor paid for.’

‘I guess they were some which would have paid a trifle more for your *thoughts* than ever you gained by your *facts*; the woman’s friends now?’

‘Not a friend as could be heard of,’ winked Bob. ‘Trust me for *that*. ’Fore I used the facts I’d have sold ’em dirt cheap if I could have turned an honest penny by the thoughts.’

‘Well, Pragg, *I* couldn’t take a woman’s life, with no provocation, in that way. If I kills, it’s ’cause I hates.’

‘Nor me neither, Stuckey. I’ve a natturl spite ’gainst that Grylls. For all *that*, I wouldn’t take her life for any money. There’ll be no hanging, take my word for it. ’Twill only be trans’tation for life. Bob Pragg knew his ground; he wouldn’t have allowed killing. Trans’tation I don’t object to for her; ’twill cure my natturl spite and do the woman good herself. She *wants* change, as the doctors say.’

‘Supposing you’m right, Bob, and she don’t swing, what a spree if the right one’s took’t at last, and is sent out to bring the other home!’

‘Never, Stuckey; jist ’cause there’s ne’er a real



one to be catched. There's no murder in the case, tho' the evidence was brimming with it. The brat died natturl.'

This was uttered in a tone that offered no appeal; nevertheless Stuckey ventured one.

'What d'ye say to the poison found *in* the child? If seeing an't believing, finding is. Sure you won't object to letting another kill the baby, since you won't have it that Grylls did it. What can you say to the laudanum, eh! Bob?'

'You've never heard of "Godfrey's," have you? Then I have, and know that up north there's more babbies sent to sleep by that there stuff than you, or the wise wigged gents, thinks for. The brat's mortal bad; has a confounded stomick-ache, or some such squealing fit; Grylls gives 'en a drop of laudanum, and the child's quiet enough—more quiet than the mother meant for. It pops off 'fore the stuff's digested; so you finds it where Grylls put it—a mere c'incidence, as the judges says, that the discovery was made—a mere c'incidence (is that the word, Stuckey?) says I, that the dying and the pizin happed together. The one hadn't nothing to do with th'other, that's *my* evidence; but 'tan't *cir'stantial*, so goes for naught.'

'Well, Pragg, I say again, your spirit's admeerable, but I couldn't see a woman 'swing for a drop of laudanum, or "Godfrey's," or what's you call it, if that's the true go.'

‘Curse your laud’num and your “Godfrey’s!” Who said she’d gave either? ’Twas something mortal stronger that killed the brat. The same’ll kill you one day. Do you know ’en? Death! As to swinging, why *you’ll* swing before *she* does. *Mark me*, once and for all, I tell’e ’twill only be trans’tation for life; and do you think just for *that*, I’d set ’em on a right track, to the lasting injury of the blessed cause? That ain’t *my* religion. Show ’em their foolery now, and they’d think twice before they’d act another time; and who knows whose turn ’twill be next—perhaps yours, perhaps Bob Pragg’s? Mind, as many rogues jumps through the trap of cir’sstantial evidence, and runs clean off, as falls in and gets a hiding. If it’s one man’s enemy it’s th’other’s friend. Don’t you thank your eternal stars if Jones pays your score and lets you off scot free?’

‘Hurrah!’ cried Stuckey.

‘You can always make peace with yourself by guessing that tho’ Jones is working out your debt, be blastered if he wouldn’t have hundreds of his own to make good otherwise; so he may all as well give you a turn as not. When he only pays his own score, he saves nobody; but when he pays another body’s, why, he saves another body without losing hisself, seeing he an’t called on to do for more than one, hisself or not hisself.’

‘Hurrah!’ again shouted Stuckey.

‘Hurrah for cir-cum-stan-tial evidence!’ cried Bob.

‘Hurrah for cir-cum-stan-tial evidence!’ was echoed through the tap-room.

And straightway Mr. Pragg proposed the toast, ‘The everlasting prosperity of circumstantial evidence.’

‘And the rising generation,’ waggishly amended Stuckey.

‘And the justice’s sermint—may it ever be written on our hearts,’ added Bob.

So, amid the uproarious merriment of the party, were these three toasts responded to with three times three.

Norwell had not known what to understand by the unexpected charge brought against Maida. As one by one the proofs of her guilt were produced, he was staggered; they were unjustifiable. The dreadful crime could, without doubt, be traced. True—he had seen the child lying dead, and Maida moaning over it; but may not she have murdered it for all that? and may not the moan have been that of remorse? Thus pondering, he glanced towards the bar—loath, very loath, we must admit it, to believe any harm of Maida; when a slight curl in the corners of her nether lip—a look he well comprehended—convinced him of her innocence more than a verdict for her could have done. When he perceived the

fatal termination of the trial, even in the distance, —too sick at heart to remain—he hurried from the court; and turning at the door to draw in one long gaze of Maida, their eyes met, and the fuel was added to the fire of her constancy; and its smoke smothered the last thought of restitution which had lingered in his heart.

Assured by a barrister that the sentence would be commuted to transportation for life, Norwell pacified himself with the thought, ‘*that* will seem nothing after such a fright, she would have had that otherwise,’ and gladly crept out of the loophole opened by circumstance (Providence, he said), and still wider opened by the fair law of England; he crept out into—

The ball-room! no harm either—it was the assize ball.

## CHAPTER VI.

MARY DOVETON.

‘ Form of beauty veil thy face,  
Worse my soul’s deformity  
Showeth by thy godlike grace  
Form of beauty, gazing on thee  
Cometh there a voice within,  
Saying, “ She is sister to thee,  
Separate though by shame and sin,  
Thou amid the husks art lying  
She among the stars doth shine—  
Yet the spark is never-dying  
Which uniteth hers to thine.” ’

THERE was one of that gay group in the ball-room, from whom the history of Maida Gwynnham had not passed as an idle tale. Mary Doveton, the small, slight girl who had spoken so feelingly, could not forget the conversation. The subject of it haunted alike her waking and her sleeping thoughts, until she determined to visit the prison. A bold resolve for so timid and gentle a creature.

‘ What,’ said she, ‘ if the woman would not see me, or should be abusive?’ She shuddered. ‘ If the character they give her be true, I have no right to expect more than her indignation for my

intrusion ; but I must try ; it would be a lasting joy to speak a word of comfort to the poor outcast. I will take some of my very best flowers, and if she will not speak to me, they shall speak to her. I will place them silently in her hand, and leave her.'

When the permit was obtained, Miss Doveton culled a choice bouquet—a no insignificant sacrifice—she loved her flowers—each one was a treasure. God speed thee, Mary Doveton, on thine errand of mercy ; there is an angel by thy side, though thou seest him not.

As the gaoler drew back the bolt of Maida's cell, Miss Doveton unconsciously grasped his hand, as if she would fain delay. The stern ruggedness of his face softened as he met the beseeching gaze of those lovely eyes, and in a tone of would-be kindness, he muttered,—

'Lord love your innocent face, she'm as quiet as a lamb, unless you raise the devil's own spirit in her ; and you don't seem likely for that. 'Tis the parsons she hates.'

Have you ever seen a child brought to its parent for punishment ? Have you noticed how the little truant stands abashed in the awful presence, its eyes fixing timorously on its father, as the golden head drops, in frightened submission to the pending judgment ?

If so, you may picture Mary Doveton inside

Maida's cell. Her bonnet had fallen off, leaving waves of golden hair to float unrestrained over her shoulders. The only ray of light that made day in the dismal spot, fell full on her ; and her hair, glistening in that solitary ray, seemed to give forth a halo.

Maida beheld in amazement the beautiful apparition. As it stood there so still, so saint-like, you might have asked with her, 'Is it an angel?' had you not known it to be an exquisite form of mortality.

Struggling to keep down the impulse which urged her to greet the wondrous stranger with tearful eagerness, Maida said,—

'Do you want me?'

'They let me come to see you—may I?'

'If you are not come to read the Bible.'

'No, I never thought of it ; but if you wish—'

'No, indeed ! thank you. It angers me dreadfully to have people come palavering. Now I am a wretched castaway they come with their Bible, as though it were an instrument of torture, fit for *me* and such-like felons. Pah ! this morning the chaplain read, with much unction, "The wicked shall be turned into hell;" sweet consolation, isn't it?'

'Dreadful ! only you would find many passages quite as true as that, only full of hope, if you read the Bible,' replied Miss Doveton, with gentle

naïveté. ‘Whenever I am unhappy I read the Bible, and you cannot tell how it comforts me.’

‘You, dear innocent! what can there be there not soothing to you? It is very delightful to read of peace, joy, happiness, and glory; but what if you read of remorse, misery, death, and hell; would it *then* be sweet?’

‘Oh, dear!’ the tears starting to her eyes, ‘here I came to console you, and I’ve made you worse! I do not understand these things; but I am very sure there *is* comfort in the Bible, though there *are* also such dreadful truths.’

‘Truths?’

‘Oh, yes! they would not be terrible were they not truths; there is the comfort.’

Poor Miss Doveton was thoroughly bewildered.

‘Terror and comfort together? How?—where?’

‘Dear, dear! I am so puzzled; I never came to preach, I mean,—what *do* I mean? the very knowledge that all the bad is true, tells one that the good is also true; so that there is sweet even in the bitter.’

‘How do you know that either is true? who ever came back to say so?’

‘You mustn’t ask me, indeed; I do not understand these matters. I believe, because I cannot help believing; every feeling in me says the Bible is all true; besides, I saw grandmamma die; she



smiled through her shocking pains, and said she was so happy—and she could not have been happy about nothing.’

‘No; trifles would not amuse in the solemn hour of death; but I do not like this kind of talk.’

‘I had no previous thought of entering on it. Is there anything I can do for you? Any friend you would like me to write to? I should be so pleased to be of some service to you.’

A faint smile only replied to the kind questions. An inward struggle kept Maida silent a few minutes. Mary had drawn close, and was now sitting by her side.

‘I have not a friend in the world,’ at last trembled from the prisoner’s lips.

‘No father? no mother? no one to weep for you? Oh! should not I be wicked if I had no one to love me? You must have been very desolate!’

Maida Gwynnham hated pity, her proud spirit rebelled against it; but there was something in the low, sweet murmur in which Mary had spoken, that soothed rather than irritated. It sounded not as pity doled out, an alm to her suffering state. It seemed more like a thought that had strayed into speech without the thinker’s permission.

‘I have a father, but I have made him my enemy!’

‘Oh! where is he? I will go myself and im-

plore him to forgive you ; this very day—if possible.’

The old look of withering scorn was beginning to gather, and poor Miss Doveton feared she had been too hasty ; but the look was not meant for her.

‘He does not know I am here ; it is *I* who will not pardon myself, not my father who refuses to forgive. I believe he—’

The tears were in Miss Doveton’s eyes ; she turned her head and strained her lids to the widest opening-point, in the vain endeavour to make the unruly drops be quiet ; but pit-pat, pit-pat they fell softly on the hard floor. Maida leant forward, supporting her face, hands, and arms on her knees. Her breast heaved violently, as if acting the safety-valve to some tumultuous feeling that would otherwise break through every obstruction. Whilst so seated, she heard a timid voice—

‘You have one friend.’

It was a touching sight, those two sister spirits blending, each one according to her own peculiar temper. The earnest, sorrowful gaze of Mary bent on the drooping, convulsed form of the convict. The sobs of agony, no longer to be checked, were easing one by one the o’erburdened heart of Maida Gwynnham—a storm-shower characteristic of her. The gloomy thunderous cloud shadowing her life could only find relief in so passionate an outbreak. While the purely sympathetic and

scarcely-perceived tears of Mary Doveton distilled like grateful dew. The heaven of her heart could never gather a cloud sufficiently dense to yield more than the soft rain upon the tender herb. She could not be passionate even in the two chief endowments of her soul—love and truth.

There was an unexpected witness of that scene ; he never forgot it ; it stereotyped itself upon his soul, and opened a new era in his career. By some chance it had been forgotten that Maida already had company in her cell ; so when Captain Norwell presented his order at the prison gate he gained admittance, and the gaoler, who waited outside the cell to re-conduct Miss Doveton through the corridors, was able to push back the door without attracting notice from the inmates. Norwell was about to enter when he observed that Maida was not alone. A glance sufficed to tell him who was the stranger. If Maida had thought her angelic as she paused in the doorway, how much more so did Mary appear in Norwell's sight ; kneeling on the hard earth in that dark corner, her hands crossed upon her bosom, her eyes upturned in tender pleading, she seemed to him one of those bright beings sent forth to minister of the mercies of their God : the wings with which accepted belief invests those celestial messengers, imagination supplied in the flowing drapery of a morning dress, which fell in graceful folds around

her. Except in adding to the effect of the exquisite *coup d'œil*, Maida bore no share in Norwell's admiration. He saw but one form, and felt he could almost become the habitant of a felon's cell if thereby he might earn a place in the affections of so fair, so pure a creature as Mary Doveton. Even *his* perverted perceptions failed not to discern that prayer was eloquent in those upturned eyes: though no utterance betrayed the hallowed secret, it was clear to even him that the spirit sought from its heavenly Master a fresh commission of mercy.

'Oh! would that she prayed for me, and I should be sure of heaven,' mentally cried he who prayed not for himself, or he had not fallen so deeply.

Silencing the gaoler by laying his finger on his lips, Norwell retreated; the beauty of holiness was irradiating the prison; he dared not desecrate it by his guilty presence.

Thenceforward Maida bore but a very secondary part in Norwell's heart. In his conscience she lived—inmortal.

'Maida!' at last said Miss Doveton.

'Maida! where did you hear that name?'

'Is that not your name? Surely I was told it was.'

'Right—it was.'

'You are married, then?' checking herself as

the remembrance of Maida's crime rushed through her. 'Of course—I had forgotten.'

'I am not married,' firmly replied Maida, 'or I should not be here; if you please we will not touch upon that subject—*the cause of all!*'

Miss Doveton looked puzzled.

Ah! Mary Doveton, there are more things in the philosophy of the wicked than are dreamt of in the paradise of your mind.

'Tell me, how did you hear that name? I am not known by it here.'

Whilst Miss Doveton tells Maida that it was a gentleman who had inadvertently called her so, and that being an uncommon name it had fixed itself on her mind, we will revert to the alias. When the constable apprehended Maida as Martha Grylls, she had, with the penetration foreseen by Norwell, immediately allowed the disguise by silent acquiescence. As Martha Grylls, therefore, she was recognised in the prison, at Millbank, on shipboard, and on the government books in Van Diemen's Land. But between us she shall remain Maida Gwynnham, until necessity obliges us to yield, or she herself allows us to throw off concealment.

'Who was the gentleman? I beg pardon, anxiety for my father makes me ask; he would soon trace me to this horrible place were that name spread abroad.'

‘I do not think you need fear ; it was a stranger, a captain, who mentioned you quite casually, and by mistake he called you Maida, confusing you, I suppose, with some one else.’

Maida thirsted to hear more ;` hoping to elicit further information, she inquired—

‘How do persons talk of me ? tell me truly ; I am past caring for opinion, which, if favourable, could little elevate me in my own esteem, as it could, if ungracious, thrust me into darker depths of degradation than my own opinion has already done. How do they talk of me, Miss Doveton ?’

‘I have not many opportunities of hearing ; that gentleman spoke most feelingly of you ; indeed, I was quite drawn to him, he seemed so touched with sorrow for you ; men do not generally exhibit so much feeling. I must go now, Maida ; may I come again ?’

‘Do ; you *have* been a comfort to me ; but pray not use that name again, not even to myself.’

‘No, I will not ; I can’t tell how it is that you seem familiar to me by it.’

Miss Doveton was leaving the cell when Maida called her back—

‘Should you chance to meet that benevolent gentleman’ (oh, the wormwood !), ‘would there be harm in giving my thanks to him ? he might be gratified to know that his kindness had cheered a desolate woman.’

Simple-minded Mary perceived only feminine modesty in the uneasiness of tone in which Maida spoke ; we, who are better acquainted with portions of Norwell's story, do not so utterly misinterpret the voice : but he for whom the message is intended as a caution will certainly construe it aright. His subtle selfishness will read it as truly as though it were written with a phosphor pen on the dark wall of his conscience.

Again leaving the cell, Miss Doveton said—

‘Then I have been a comfort to you?’

‘You *have*,’ repeated Maida.

But in what way chiefly Mary guessed not. The olive-leaf had dropped into the troubled waters, and chance had guided it to the right spot. Love and sympathy had done much, but, lost amid the dark memories which crowded Maida's book of remembrance, they would have brought only temporary relief, had they omitted that whisper of glad tidings.

‘He loves you, or why those signs of grief?’

And Maida sat down to dream as others have dreamt and as many yet will dream. There is no fonder dreamist than the heart, which returns verdict for itself on every paltry evidence of love which circumstance, not proof, may yield. Through all her keen perception in other matters, Maida lacked discernment here. She who was truthful, and, therefore, trustful, consented to act a lifelong

lie to screen him who, with a few idle protestations, kept up the dream she fondly dreamt.

‘The young lady that’ve just been here came back with this here cup for your flowers, and I’ve promised to see you in water for ‘em,’ said the gaoler, breaking in upon her reverie. He seemed half ashamed of his errand, and still more so of his promise.

He showed Maida a white china mug, with ‘Mary’ painted on it in golden letters.

‘She’d been gone a half-hour ‘fore she brought it, so I reckon she’s been a pretty step for it; bless us, what next; a mighty ticklish trick of the little dear.’

As Maida did not put out her hand to receive the mug, the man set it on the floor and departed, muttering—

‘Won’t so much as look at it! I could have told her *that*; she isn’t a woman to be gammoned with toys; but lor’, she weren’t no more than a child.’

No sooner were the gaoler’s eyes off the mug than Maida’s were fixed intently on it, and her soul, nursed into gentler mood by the late reverie, eagerly drank in all the delicate assurances, all the loving sympathies which lay with those golden letters on the snow-white cup. Tenderly raising it she clasped it in both hands to her lips, and pressed



one long, fervent kiss upon the name. Then for the first time, remembering that the man had spoken of flowers, she looked around, and where Mary had knelt she saw lying a bouquet of pink and white moss rosebuds with a sprig of myrtle, and another small bunch of choice mixed flowers. Seeming to comprehend this arrangement at a glance, Maida put the buds only in the cup, and laid the other bouquet in her bosom, thinking aloud—

‘She studies my peculiarity, and I will respect her taste ; the roses shall be alone.’

The elegant instinct which led Miss Devoton, in the first instance, to choose a simple vessel rather than one of the vases which decked her luxurious home, and then, from a hundred others as simple, to select one which bore her name, that instinct was not undiscovered nor unappreciated by Maida. None but a sensitive mind can read the true motive of the unobtrusive actings of another sensitive mind, and none but sister spirits can tell the pains, the disappointments, the reproaches a sensitive mind meets with in its intercourse with those who do not reciprocate its proffered attentions nor understand its unuttered yearnings.

As many days elapsed before the governor of the gaol could convey his prisoners to Millbank,

Miss Doveton had permission and opportunity to visit Maida, and each visit but strengthened the bond of union which so mysteriously linked these two widely dissimilar characters into a relationship, rich with future interest, although a long blank for a time ignored its existence, save in the individual interests of each heart.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE REVEREND HERBERT EVELYN.

*'The secret of true eloquence is an eloquent heart.'*

STILL anxious to try what he could effect towards winning Maida's attention and confidence, Mr. Evelyn applied for permission to visit the prisoner again. Having received it, he presented himself at the gaol on the afternoon of the day on which Miss Doveton was introduced to the prisoner.

Remembering with apprehension the passionate ebullition she had given way to before Mr. Evelyn, Maida was equally anxious to see that gentleman, in order to ascertain how far she had betrayed Norwell, and her own secret. Remembering also that Mr. Evelyn had spoken of a friend who loved her better than any one else, and fearing that this friend could be none other than her father, she longed to ask her informant to whom he had alluded. But too proud to ask a favour, she incurred the risk of letting her doubts remain unsatisfied rather than seek an interview with Mr. Evelyn, through the kindness of the matron.

Pleasure was, therefore, plainly depicted on her countenance when the object of her wishes entered her cell.

‘Well, Martha, I am indeed glad to see you more cheerful; how are you, my poor girl? I have thought unceasingly of you since the night of your conviction.’

Not noticing the question, Maida eagerly exclaimed:—

‘Oh, sir! do tell me. What have I told you of my past history? I have been so miserable since you were here.’

‘Then do not be miserable; you were so excited as to be almost incoherent. I only gathered from what you said that you had been betrayed by some villain calling himself a gentleman.’

‘No names then?’

‘None. I have not the faintest clue to any particular man.’

‘Mr. Evelyn, though I was raving, I distinctly remember that *you* first spoke of a man. You said, “Who is he?” in reference to some speech of mine—you did indeed, sir.’

‘Doubtless, Martha;’ and Mr. Evelyn smiled sadly—‘but a hasty conclusion of your own aimed my words at an individual. I might have asked, “Who is *he*?” inadvertently, in *your* case. In *most* cases of crime I should have done so as one effect of my experience as chaplain to female pri-

soners, amongst which class I have found few who do not lay their misery at the foot of a seducer. That this theory has another proof in you, your impetuosity revealed only a few minutes after I made your acquaintance. The subject pains you ; we will not talk further on it until such time as I shall have gained your confidence.'

An incredulous gesture—something between a smile and a sneer—was Maida's only answer.

'I am anxious to know, sir, of whom you spoke, when you said you brought a message from some one who loved me better than—than—*He?*' She at last added, with a flushing cheek and with a firm start of her whole frame—'Was it my father?—tell me, *No*—and I care not who else it may be.'

'No, Martha! no earthly—'

'Thank God!' interrupted Maida; 'if he had sent you, he would soon be following himself' (hiding her face in her hands)—'and I could not—oh! I could not see him—it would break his heart to find me in these prison clothes. But perhaps his heart is broken already.'

She rocked herself wildly to and fro. Mr. Evelyn held his peace. Long experience had taught him that a chaplain's most favourable opportunity lies in the brief calm after a violent outburst of feeling. As he watched Maida, he hoped the storm was passing away. Not expecting that

it was but gathering strength for a fiercer gust, he was unprepared when it broke forth.

‘His Pride! His Glory!—let him come and see her now! His Beauty!—let him trace her claim to beauty now! Let him come, and I will tell him what brought her *here*. How she came by these costly robes! What brought me here? Why should I be here? Why should I stay another instant, when—’

Mr. Evelyn arose, and, laying his hand gently on Maida’s arm, said:—

‘Martha—you rave. Were you suspected of meditating an escape, the small freedom you now have would be taken from you of necessity.’

Thankful that her allusion had been misunderstood, and grateful to Mr. Evelyn for arresting that passion which might have hurried on a disclosure, she exclaimed with a long-drawn sigh:—

‘Ah yes! I must stay here—it is my place; but oh! my father—my poor father, sir; he has gray hairs, and should *he* be haunted to death by me? He knows not how deep my fall. Of my betrayal he heard—I have never seen him since. He would have forgiven me; he blamed himself—every one but *me*; he offered the refuge of home to hide my coming disgrace, but—’

‘Ah, Martha! ’tis the old story—pride! pride!’

‘Ay, cursed pride!—why did it not prevent my fall?’

‘Stop, Martha! Do you give to pride that which belongs to the grace of God?’

‘Grace! why did it not come when it was most needed? why did it let me go deep down into sin, and then—?’

‘You did not seek it, Martha.’

‘Seek it! How seek it, when I knew not it would be wanted? I was a child—a mere child; what was I to know of grace against a sin, of which I was in utter ignorance? I repeat in utter ignorance. Brought up in a solitude made to suit my father’s peculiar taste—reading only what books had first passed his approval—meeting only very occasionally with a companion, and that never of my own age, and always a guest of my father’s—how was I to compete with a temptation of which I was wholly unsuspecting? If there be remedy in grace, why was it not sent me in time?’

‘Martha!’—Mr. Evelyn spoke solemnly, almost sternly—‘do not utter words not one of which you believe yourself. Have you never learnt at your mother’s knee—“Keep us from temptation, and deliver us from evil?” Have you never had a Bible in which to read—“Christ is able to succour them that are tempted?” Have you never been to church to hear—“O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee, mercifully accept our prayers: and because, through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without

Thee, grant us the help of 'Thy grace,' etc., etc. ? Whilst I would cast every possible reproach upon your seducer, I would be faithful to you ; and I must say, Martha—listen—you did not seek God's *special* grace, and refused his *natural* grace in rejecting the way of escape it offered.'

Unaccustomed to anything but scorn from her neighbours, and of insidious flattery or abject servility from Norwell, the honest, manly, unflinching voice of truth, though full of reproof to herself, was attractive to Maida. It sounded to her ear as the thrilling bass of some long-forgotten tune, and she quietly seated herself to listen to it, whilst her face assumed an interrogatory expression, which seemed to ask :—

'What way of escape ?'

'Your father ; why did you not confide in him, Martha ?'

'Mr. Evelyn, you cannot be dealing truly with me in saying you are unacquainted with my history !'

Another sad smile.

'Poor child—I am acquainted with all this clause of your history, and can divide it into two heads :—First. Destruction wilfully brought on yourself by disobedience to your father's commands in encouraging the man. Second. Destruction by foolishly keeping the pledges of his love to yourself, and so depriving yourself of the benefit of



your father's judgment ; he would have discerned for you between the real and unreal. I admit all you urge in respect to youth and ignorance, in all their unsuspecting trustfulness ; but must repeat you rejected the natural remedy God's grace provided for that youth and ignorance, namely, the age and experience of a parent. I do not press the still higher remedy—the guidance, the counsel of your heavenly Father. You perceive, Martha, I guess that the latter was your case—am I right ?

‘A man that tells me all things that ever I did,’ thought Maida, as she sat still, deliberating whether to affirm Mr. Evelyn's conjecture or not. ‘Had my father laid commands on me, I should have obeyed them from love to him. Then I hated commands, now I consider them just and proper, though I have, I am sorry to say, no better inclination to follow them.’

‘And so, Martha, because you hated commands, you avoided the chance of having them laid upon your actions ?’

‘Not exactly.’ (Maida's mind wandered in the past, or she had not been so communicative.) ‘*He* told me no one was expected to tell love secrets even to parents, and I partly believed him ; especially as my father had never spoken in language that I understood of things likely to happen as I went through the world—now the fulfilment has passed ; I read the prophecy ; but when my father





spoke it, it was a very dark saying—it was a foreign tongue—I understood not its vague cautions—ah! yes, I remember—.’ Her words lapsed into indistinctness.

‘*Partly believed*, Martha? there began the evil,’ said Mr. Evelyn. Maida aroused herself, and replied with energy—

‘Do not let me deceive you, sir. I had a conviction that I ought to seek parental advice, but fearing my father would not consent to what I supposed were honourable proposals, because he would not like to lose me, I was glad to believe the propriety of keeping the whole matter from him until it was settled, and so I was led on until—ah! I was a child then! Oh, God! that my eyes had then been opened!’ Suddenly checking herself, Maida looked up in surprise—she had been talking in a day-sleep. Mr. Evelyn continued for her:—‘Until the fatal step was taken, and the wretched man told you, that having already lost all that woman cares to lose, you might as well continue an alien to your father’s house. Poor girl! you have been cruelly wronged. Martha, will you kneel down and pray with me for that cruel man?’

Mr. Evelyn was generally sure of his ground before he ventured on it; he thought he was sure with Maida. He had found that many a haughty and wilful spirit will bend in formal prayer for others, when it scorns to do so for itself, and that

many a depressed and burdened soul can venture that prayer for others it dares not offer for itself. Thinking that Maida partook of both these characters, he hoped that in listening to his prayer for Norwell, she might unaware send a petition for herself to Him who heareth alway. It was, therefore, with some disappointment that he received Maida's answer—a very decided and somewhat angry,

‘No!’ Then in a softer tone, she added, ‘Mr. Evelyn, if you would not raise a worse spirit in me than I have already, please not to pity me, nor speak so harshly of him; and as to praying for him, he needs some one better than I to do that—or little benefited will he be!’

‘Then *I* will pray for him, Martha. I suppose as far as position goes, you will allow that I am better than you, and therefore permit me this privilege. In God's sight there is neither bestness or worseness; what one is, that is the other—only excepting as the one or the other stands in relation to the Saviour of sinners. Martha, we shall understand each other by-and-by; in the mean time I will try not to pity you; but I have a trick of pitying persons, more, perhaps, to relieve myself, than comfort them. We often pity others in order to let off a pain from ourselves,’ said Mr. Evelyn, in a cheerful manner, that ill accorded with his voice and countenance. ‘Before I go, Martha,

you will not object to let me observe my usual custom ?’

Maida gave no reply. Shutting his eyes, and clasping his hands, Mr. Evelyn repeated three texts :—

‘ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’

‘ Take my yoke upon you and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest to your souls.’

‘ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’

Unable to resist the inspiration of these exquisite words, he broke forth into a most fervent supplication to Maida to consider the things belonging to her eternal peace ; but whatever she felt, the arctic frigidity of her features did not relax, nor did the almost disdainful silence give way. Her spirit was beyond hypocrisy ; neither by speech or gesture would she say what she did not feel. She let her benevolent visitor talk on until he had preached a short sermon—when she stopped him. ‘ Sir, I know enough of these subjects to be aware that if there are degrees of punishment, mine will be the heavier for your visit to-day. I beg of you to desist. I appreciate your goodness in thus interesting yourself for me ; but I must be candid and tell you that I am not yet sufficiently accustomed to my new position to feel pleased at being considered a lion of crime.’

‘Poor Martha!’ cried Mr. Evelyn, before he could prevent the unfortunate words, ‘I will not make you add sin to sin. I will not continue my visits since they are distasteful to you. I will not come again; but, Martha, I will pray for you *very* earnestly. Your youth, your crime, yourself, have made a deep impression on me. There is a mystery in your history that I cannot fathom—there is something in your bearing so different from what I expected in one convicted of murder, that I would fain sound that mystery. I know that the law even is sometimes deceived.’

A satirical smile lurked in the corners of Maida’s lips—a smile into which Mr. Evelyn gave a wistful and searching glance. He had spent a large part of his life in reading the smiles, nods, looks, and hearts of prisoners, but was baffled in his present attempt to read the meaning in that curling lip.

‘Well, then, good-bye, Martha Grylls; we part in prison, why not meet in heaven? and we *shall* if prayer may take you there: but, remember, there *must* be repentance. Arise, go to your Father; He will behold you when you are yet a great way off—yes, as far off as Van Diemen’s Land. Take this little pocket-bible, and read it for *my* sake, not for your own.’ Then, looking upward, he exclaimed—

‘O God! for the sake of the Sinless One, con-

vince this poor wanderer of her guilt, that knowing it she may abhor it, and that abhorring it she may seek forgiveness, that seeking forgiveness she may find it through her only Saviour and Mediator Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Mr. Evelyn waited, but no 'Amen' came from Maida. He watched her face, but no 'Amen' was there. He then marked a slight tremor in her fingers as they entwined themselves more firmly in each other upon her breast; and with a faint ray of hope he was closing the door of the cell, thinking, with Mary Doveton, 'there may be a breaking heart behind a brazen wall,' when Maida called him back—she hesitated—then very softly said—

'Will you do me a favour, sir?'

'Anything—anything, Martha.'

'I shall have all my hair cut off when I am at Millbank; do you think they would give me two locks for a particular purpose?'

'Perhaps; it depends upon what person you ask: the matron would, I am sure; you must speak to her, and then?'

'Three months after I have gone—that is, left England—will you send one to my father, whose address you must promise not to discover until then, when, by a clue I will leave, you will easily find him—and the other—no, thank you, I will send that myself—will you oblige me, sir?'



‘Willingly; but, Martha, you must write to your father.’

‘Impossible, Mr. Evelyn! Should his own daughter’s be the hand to sign his death-warrant?’

‘Yes, Martha! the warrant has to reach him—let it be through his child rather than through the public executioner. I have a daughter; I know a father’s feelings. You have also yourself to think of and act for; you have to prepare your dying bed.’

‘Oh, Mr. Evelyn! believe me, you do not know my father; his pardon is as surely granted as though it were sealed, signed, and delivered to my possession. He would mourn, he would weep, he would bless; but never, never curse.’

‘And so you would take advantage of your father’s gentle weakness towards his erring child? I tell you, Martha, there is unworthy cowardice in this—yes—I say it—a cowardice unworthy of Martha Grylls, though the law has set its indelible mark upon her, making her in the world’s view incapable of further unworthiness. Martha, I am God’s ambassador of peace; but, in God’s name, I declare I will never cry peace, peace, when there is no peace. I cannot speak peace to you on this solemn subject. I cannot flatter you with doubts as to what you have done; you have most likely brought a premature death upon your father, and without one sustaining hope you would

let him totter to his grave; but I can and do implore you, in the name of God, and for the sake of your own last hours, to hasten to perform the very small duty which God's mercy still leaves open to you—to seek your father's pardon—'

'You do not know what you ask for, sir. Were I to write, he would come to me; and I would rather that he should see me in my coffin than here: it would finish the breaking of his heart; and, surely, you would not bid me do that! besides, it would unnerve me—and then—'

'Would to God I could see you unnerved, Martha!'

Maida grasped Mr. Evelyn's hand, and fixing her eyes intently on him, whispered in beseeching tones—

'For pity's sake, do not talk so, sir; you will undo me—you will ruin me. What good would his pardon work upon a soul unforgiven by itself? For pity's sake, no more of this.'

'It is just for pity's sake that I would and must speak, my poor Martha; calm yourself, and listen to me—

'I have but lately come from that country to which you are shortly to be sent. For more than fourteen years I laboured there as a convict chaplain. I could tell you of hardships, of ill-treatment, of solitude, of home-sickness, of loveless labour, and of unrewarded servitude—all of which

you must undergo ; but all I could reveal of these, in their every crushing misery, would be insignificant compared to what I could disclose of the unrelenting tortures inflicted under the sentence of conscience—the sentence of remorse !. generally reserved for hours of solitary imprisonment, or the day of sickness and death, when its victims are unable to lighten it by toil, or elude it by flight.

‘From one cruel phase of this torture I would rescue you, in imploring you to seek your father’s pardon. That knowledge with which you *now* satisfy yourself will avail you nothing when once the great gulph betwixt him and you is passed. • Too late you will then find that pardon, which exists only in your interpretation of his amiable nature, has no power to supersede that full, free promise of the heart flowing through the lip or pen. Many a soul, for whom I humbly hope mercy has been found in heaven, has gone out in utter darkness, unable to enjoy, or even to feel, the forgiveness accorded by its God, because no cherished voice, following from a parent’s roof, echoed the glad tidings of reconciliation. Many an instance of the value set on parental forgiveness I could bring forward ; one shall suffice. I remember a hard-featured, rugged-hearted man, who had laughed at my ministrations from the pulpit—defied my exhortations in the cell—a man who sneered at religion and denied his God—I re-

member him in tears, with heaving breast and trembling limbs, bending over a soiled and tattered scrap of paper on which was written—

‘ “Mother’s forgiveness and blessing goes with her boy.”

‘ “I’d strike that man dead, sir, were he the comptroller-general, or were he a third-class officer, who ventured to take that from me; except when I look at it, to make sure it’s safe, it never leaves my person.”

‘Those were his very words, and *there* is that scrap of paper, Martha! As the best gift he could give me—as the surest proof that I had won his confidence and love—that hard-featured, rugged-hearted man, on his dying bed, put it into my hand, saying—“You’ll value it on instead of me. If you had’nt been here I’d have got a mate to bury it with me.”’

The little piece of paper fluttered slowly to the ground—and as Maida stooped over it longer than was necessary to pick it up, Mr. Evelyn watched her closely, but without result.

‘Mr. Evelyn, you *will* not understand me—let me explain myself—but first, I pray you to believe that neither stubbornness nor pride is now at work in me. As we see an object for the last time, so do we picture it on for ever. We may hear a thousand tales of that object afterwards—and we may receive them all—but without altering the

impression left upon our minds. Still mentally, looking at the object as it *was* when we *last* saw it, shape and form are the same, circumstance alone is changed, and we mourn over it as a ruined greatness, rather than denounce it as a subject of contempt. Mr. Evelyn, were your son drowned, would you rather be present to hear his dying cry, and to see his struggling form float from your grasp, and so lay up for yourself a perpetual horror in the remembrance of the scene; or, supposing a choice between two terrors were imperative, would you rather have the tidings of his death brought to you, sparing you the haunting apparition, and leaving to your imagination your son as you last saw him—the bright, noble, intrepid youth? Your anguish might discover him beneath the sea, but could not taunt your sight with the distorted lineaments of death—it would but point to the own loved features of your boy, as undisturbed and beautiful as though yourself had laid him there. I need not apply my words, sir; shall I in pity leave my father his only present consolation—the portrait of his child as she *was*? or, shall I tear it from him to replace it with a lasting pain in the picture of his daughter as she *is*—Martha Grylls, the Felon?’

It was a random shot; but deeply it wounded the target’s centre. Mr. Evelyn *had* lost an only son at sea; *had* watched in agonised helplessness

his unavailing struggles; *had* heard the stifling cry, and the solemn gurgle, as the divided wave closed over its lovely prey, and for evermore the struggle, the cry, and the gurgle, were in his heart and ear.

‘You are ill, sir?’ Maida advanced anxiously towards Mr. Evelyn, who, pressing one hand to his brow, supported himself by spreading the other on the wall.

‘One moment, Martha!’ whispered Mr. Evelyn, gently motioning her back; one moment passed, and a heavy respiration alone told of the contest from which he had come.

‘I do not ask you to *see* your father, Martha. Under your circumstances, where there are all the finer feelings of the *gentleman* as well as the keen susceptibilities of the parent to be consulted, I would not advise a meeting; but you must write.’

A very earnest and steady look into Maida’s face accompanied this boldly given, decidedly made assertion; but at the time, neither look nor assertion were noticed; the prisoner’s thoughts were pre-occupied, and her eyes fixed on the ground.

‘You must write, Martha; and I will undertake to prevent a meeting; and also, if it would spare you pain, I would write to Mr. Grylls—(is that his name?)—break the dreadful intelligence, and prepare him to receive your letter.’

‘ Oh, no ! thank you, kindly ; if it has to be done, I will do it myself. I do not shrink from a penance as just as it is severe, for the news will break his heart. I have brought it on myself. The letter shall be written ; but I must be allowed to send it according to my own arrangement, in order to make his coming impossible.’

‘ The matron will, doubtless, permit you this indulgence. I only ask you, Martha, to let me know when you send the letter.’

‘ You shall be informed, sir ; and I thank you for showing me this duty. But, Mr. Evelyn, what did you say about my father’s name—do not keep me in doubt—what do you know of him that you should say he is a gentleman ? from whom did you hear it ?’

‘ From *you*, Martha !’

‘ From me, sir !’ An expression of more alarm than she had exhibited heretofore, warned Mr. Evelyn that he must be explicit if he would be merciful.

‘ I repeat, from *you* ; what your father is I discern in every aspect of yourself, to say nothing of the information I have gleaned from an inadvertency of your own. Martha ! you are not what you appear. Long experience has shown me that prisoners claim others in their rank than the poor and uneducated ; it is not easy to deceive my practised eye and ear, how much soever you may

wish it. Martha Grylls, you cannot hide from me the position in life from which you have fallen.'

To Mr. Evelyn's disappointment, a look of intense relief followed this reply. Ever dreading what her passion might reveal, Maida received with indifference a communication that at another time might have annoyed her. The disclosure was nonimportant compared with some she could make.

'Farewell, Martha; I have already given you a parting benediction in that little book, and for my sake you have promised to read it. Be faithful to yourself in writing to your father. I will pray that you may be supported in the bitter trial, and that he may have strength to endure the impending stroke. God bless you!'

The key had hardly turned upon Maida ere a loud and touching cry vibrated through the stillness of the corridors.

'In one of her tantrums,' explained the gaoler.

'God be praised!' ejaculated Mr. Evelyn, almost simultaneously, to the complete mystification of his companion, who perceived no ultimate, much less immediate cause for thanksgiving in 'another of that woman's tantrums.'

Meeting the governor's wife in one of the passages, Mr. Evelyn made known to her the prisoner's desire respecting the hair. Mrs. Lowe



engaged that the wish should be gratified as far as her influence with the superintendent of Millbank extended, but advised the putting possibility beyond all doubt by at once cutting off the two required locks.

‘I should not like to be present, sir, when she has her beautiful hair taken off. I am glad to be spared the painful sight. It will be a great trial to her; so peculiar a creature.’

‘She will not feel it, I think, Mrs. Lowe; there is no petty weakness in her grief. As a concomitant of her humiliating portion, she may receive it with a shudder, but the shudder would be for herself, not for her hair.’

Mr. Evelyn was right in Maida’s case, but generally, convicts are more sensible of mortification in being deprived of nature’s best ornament than in almost any other course of penal discipline. In Van Diemen’s Land the convicts, especially the *men*, allow their hair to grow to an unbecoming length as an indisputable voucher of respectability. But we anticipate.

The gaoler, who had overheard Mrs. Lowe’s remark, suggested to Mr. Evelyn, in a very confidential tone;

‘That woman’s hair’ll fetch a mint o’money, sir; she wer’n’t up to it, or she’d never have brought it in with her.’

A stern frown reprimanded this very natural

spirit of speculation, which the gaoler misunderstanding, replied apologetically,

‘Yes, well, sir, you’re right—it is fair it should go to government.’

But Mr. Evelyn’s frown did not accept the apology.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## TOO LATE.

A FULL half-hour before the ——— station opened to the public, a closely shut vehicle drove to the gate, which immediately unlocked, and as quickly fastened, upon a decently dressed female, who seemed to conduct rather than accompany, three thickly veiled women that had alighted and entered the platform with her; but their presence was ignored by the G. W. R. officials, and their existence only recognised in the person of her whom, par excellence, we designate '*the female*.' When she advanced to a carriage, the same secret understanding appeared there as at the entrance. The door instantly and quietly opened. She stood back, and let the veiled three precede her into the compartment, then, seating herself between two and in the front of the third, she beckoned to a G. W. R. and he locked them in. This being accomplished, she heaved a gentle sigh of satisfaction, and leaning back to repose her exhausted

energies, said mildly to the three, 'You may make yourselves as comfortable as you like, now.'

She should have said, and, doubtless, meant to say, 'You may make yourselves as comfortable as you *can*, now.'

Neither of the three availed herself of the permission. Indeed, their whole expression of dress and mien gave one the idea of discomfort too sure and certain to admit of the possibility of relief. Though assisted by 'the female' to surmount the stepping-in difficulty, each had displayed a peculiar awkwardness in the act that reminded one of the cramp. Afterwards, as they sat securely pinned in their shawls, one felt inclined to ask, 'What has become of their arms?'

But just then the carriage was made to back, and it had scarcely done so, ere the warning bell rang, and the express down train, snorting over the viaduct, ran into the vacated line.

Dexterously as 'the female' had contrived her entry, two other individuals had benefited by the premature unlocking of the station gates. One, a military man, had effected his entrance with a silver latch key; the other, a clergyman, by virtue of a lofty bearing, and an authority too marked for gainsay. Merely acknowledging his entrance by a slight inclination of his head to the wondering porter, Mr. Evelyn walked to a bookstall and purchased Bradshaw. Turning its pages until he

arrived at the down trains, he passed his finger rapidly through the hour list of London departures, then, hastily shutting the guide, he murmured,

‘Yes—he can be here! Let me see: he received the letter yesterday morning—started for town by next train, and left by night express; he will be here presently, if I read the poor man’s heart aright.’

Having thus inferred, Mr. Evelyn paced the platform in a sharp, uneasy step, and occasionally stopped short, to look earnestly out on the distance. In doing thus he knocked against a gentleman who was leaning on the further side of one of the broad pillars which supported the canopy. A glance of recognition passed between the two gentlemen, and as Mr. Evelyn turned away from the pale and haggard countenance, the same text which on a previous occasion had applied itself to it, again intruded on his mind.

‘Confound the man! He haunts a fellow when least he’s wanted.’

With this surly salutation, Captain Norwell once more ensconced himself in his retreat.

Then it was that the down express snorted over the viaduct, and venting the remainder of its fury in portentous puffs, glided swiftly up the line, and stayed itself before the station.

In a moment all was hurry and seeming confusion.

‘*This* door, porter! *this* door!’ wailed a feeble voice from one of the first-class compartments.

The porter threw open the door. A tall, bowed figure issued from it, and stood in the midst of the bustle and packages as though all the bustle and packages in the world were nothing to *it*. With a helpless and almost imbecile expression, the figure raised its lack-lustre eyes and stared into the motley crowd, searching for some one who should be found in it.

A shrill whistle was the first sound that aroused the isolated figure to a consciousness that it must seek if it would find.

‘Guard, isn’t there a train leaving soon?’ it feebly asked.

‘Nour-and-half, sir.’

‘Is that the one that is to carry some—prisoners to London?’

‘Just started, sir; see it up the hill there.’

A piteous cry—a heavy fall—and two persons, drawn to the spot by sympathetic attraction, bore Mr. Gwynnham, a senseless paralytic, from the platform.

‘Shall he be taken to my house, sir?’ asked Mr. Evelyn, for mere politeness.

‘If you please, sir; I am a stranger here,’ assented Captain Norwell.

Anywhere! anywhere! There is no spot on  
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earth he now cares to call his home—that poor old man. Beggared amidst a pleasant competency. Insolvent whilst his credit is good. A traitor has presided at the treasury, and the bank of love has failed.

Anywhere ! anywhere ! let the bowed head find rest and the aching heart a corner to throb out its pain.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE COUSINS.

‘ Upon thy laughter-loving lip  
 Hangeth the ever-ready quip,  
 Thou couldst not hide thy whereabouts  
 Tho’ thou shouldst wing from tree to tree,  
 Thy song, sweet bird, would find thee out,  
 For long thou couldst not silent be.’

At the date of this story’s commencement Mr. Evelyn had been one year in England, and six months prior to that date he had lost his wife in Van Diemen’s Land. The suddenness of the event preyed on his already impaired health; and listening to the solicitations of his brother and only child he resigned his chaplaincy in Hobarton in order to return to England to seek that repose for himself which his jaded energies so much required, and for his daughter those advantages which colonial education but sparely afforded.

The arrival of their Tasmanian cousin was looked forward to with no small excitement by the D’Urban family. Bridget D’Urban, ever full of fun and drollery, had many a good-natured laugh in store for all the uncouth barbarities she expected in the



young colonist; while her mother had secret misgivings that her girls would find no beneficial associate in one who must have imbibed a wrong view of things from unavoidable contact with the mixed and sometimes questionable society of Van Diemen's Land.

Both aunt and cousins were, therefore, sufficiently surprised when, late of a summer's evening, Uncle Herbert (as henceforward we shall have to distinguish the Reverend Mr. Evelyn) introduced to them cousin Emmeline, a young lady, who, from ease of manner and grace of deportment, might have done justice to any English drawing-room.

Bridget having made up her mind that Emmeline was as much her inferior in every-day proprieties as she was her equal in years, had determined, in the generous ardour of her heart, to spread the wing of her protection and hide from censure all her cousin's short-comings. She was accordingly disconcerted to find herself in the presence of a superior, who had no improprieties to shield and but few short-comings to pardon! It was from no exalted idea of her own social attainments that Bridget had thus pictured Emmeline—but unaware she had adapted the D'Urban mode of thinking, "Can any good come out of Tasmania?" and as her mamma's strictures on hoydenism and boldness increased in fervour and number as Miss Evelyn's

arrival drew near, she very naturally supposed that the surplus strictures were intended to warn against a worse hoyden than herself.

Neither had foiled conceit any share in her present discomfiture. She was simply confused at having made so grand a mistake, just as you and I should feel discomposed on meeting a tall, stately personage, where we had entered, expecting to be pounced upon by a little frisky body.

In a quarter of an hour Bridget was as proud of her cousin's appearance and manners as she had meant to be tender with her failings and faults. The contrast between the two girls was very striking—the more so, as they were of the same age—both on the verge of seventeen. The young English maiden was a girl in every sense—a good-looking, bright-eyed, rosy, laughter-loving creature. Showing a decided preference for the sunny side of life, and for ever trying to shun the shadowy side; not by any means from a selfish indifference to the troubles of her neighbour, but because, in her own words, 'It's so horrid to see wretchedness without being able to relieve it;' unheeding of the jarring chords of less harmonious spirits, her heart seemed to beat time to a brilliant fantasia of its own: so with a song in her heart and a smile on her lip, Bridget D'Urban was rarely out of sorts with anything but misfortune that refused to yield to the sound of music and dancing, the only two remedies her jubilant

mind could at that time suggest to the sons and daughters of sorrow.

She was the idol of the servants—ever ready to help them over a scrape, or to put her best construction on their worst action: they were never in fear of dismissal when Miss Bridget stood by them. Uncle Herbert told her that she would make a capital convict mistress, and advised her to try her alchymic powers of turning bad to good on a few of the Queen's specimens: on which she clapped her hands, and declared that nothing would be better fun than to go out there and cure a few kitchen rows; and then jumped up to cure uncle and cousin's grave faces by a hearty kiss and a second declaration that *that* was only her way of saying how delightful it would be to go to Van Diemen's Land. She knew she should be the last to think it *fun* and the first to call it *horril* to see the poor, dear beings so miserable. Mr. Evelyn and her cousin believed her, for they were sure that *not* the bright, merry, dancing hearts are the selfish ones, though appearances are against them—but the cloudy, crabbed, slow-going hearts, they are the selfish sort. The former, placed side by side with affliction, soon are taught the best lessons it can teach—while the latter, as they approximate distress and care, become more moody, crabbed, and stagnantly *past* going.

Prematured by a southern clime, and pre-aged by constitutional delicacy, Miss Evelyn had little of

the girl in her, but all the appearance of finished womanhood in her gentle gravity of countenance and quiet dignity of carriage. She much resembled her father: to make her as like him as nature evidently intended, she wanted in her calm features and serene eyes a certain pained expression, remarkable in every line of Mr. Evelyn's face—an expression that had gradually stamped itself there during the holy man's long-continued warfare against a spiritual antagonist, who, with more than Goliath's effrontery, daily, hourly appeared from the camp of sin and defied this champion of the cross.

A somewhat morbid tendency of mind early displayed itself in Emmeline. Her discerning parents immediately perceived the unhealthy predilection which, unchecked, would injure their little daughter's power of receiving and appropriating truth, and devoted themselves to effect a cure by a treatment at once skilful and lenient. They endeavoured on the one hand, by a nicely graduated scale of precept and by an unflagging course of judicious and illustrative practice, to teach her her responsible position in the world—and, on the other hand, to set beyond reach all that would increase her defective perception of right and wrong.

This was not easy to accomplish, surrounded as they were by an influence which only exerted itself for evil as a rule, and chanced to be harmless as an

exception. It was only by that unceasing self-restraint and anxious vigilance, so prejudicial to the health and comfort of Tasmanian mothers, that Mrs. Evelyn succeeded in planting around Emmeline a system free from moral contamination.

Establishing herself in the nursery, she permitted no one to converse with the little Emmeline save in her presence, an old woman, who had been nurse in her mother's family, the only exception. Mr. Evelyn made it his particular care to guard against a spirit of conceit, which this exclusive education might induce in his daughter. Associating her, as she grew older, with himself in a few of his many projects for improving the moral condition of some of his penal flock, he sought, and not in vain, to enlist her sympathies for those who (he taught her) were still her fellow-creatures, though debased to the condition of slavery.

There was no lesson he sought more earnestly to inculcate than that one so many are apt to forget; namely, That sin is to be hated as the great opposing principle of holiness, and not to be scorned because its effects are evil. He ever bade her remember that circumstance naturally, and God's grace specially, alone preserved her from being as those she saw around her.

When Emmeline attained her sixteenth year,

she needed but a touch to make her all her parents desired.

That master-touch was given by God himself. The finger which laid the mother on her bier, and bowed the father's head in grief, aroused the daughter; and like the evening primrose, which raises its beautiful head only to the night, she stood in the midst of desolation as one sent by God.

Mr. Evelyn trembled to convey to her the news of the calamity that had stricken their hearth. He feared lest the old tendency, in spite of patient treatment and long quiescence, should break forth and vent itself in morbid lamentings over her mother's grave. Hence, with amazement, he beheld Emmeline arise from self and selfish sorrow, to perform, unbidden, those tender duties which are right-minded woman's prerogative, and perform them with a delicacy rarely secured but by experience, and with a judgment ripened into maturity, with a suddenness that astonished on-lookers—a judgment that might never have burst beyond latent existence, save beneath the scorching sun of affliction.

She appeared to her father a living rebuke to doubt—a voice as of old stilling the storm ;—

‘ Oh, thou of little faith! wherefore didst thou doubt?’

Shall that seed which is sown in prayer, and watered with tears, fail to bloom when the fulness of time is come?

During the long four months of homeward passage, Mr. Evelyn had leisure and opportunity for uninterrupted intercourse with his daughter, an enjoyment which active service in Hobarton had seldom permitted him. With humble gratitude he found, during the voyage, that Providence had reared a help truly meet for him in his own child, and it added not a little to his pleasure to know that he had been favoured to assist in the goodly work; and, much to his sorrow, to remember that she who had laboured with him in the unremitting toil of years was now deaf to the voice that had arisen to call her blessed.

One night they sat together on the poop. Above them the exquisite tropical sky was radiant with that calm loveliness which must be felt (we do not say *seen*) to be apprehended. Below, the wake of the vessel glittered like a molten glory rushing past them. Mr. Evelyn seemed to be gazing into the unseen world, through the medium of that rushing glory, associating the loved in death with the beautiful in life; for he spoke not, neither raised he his eye from the ocean.

Emmeline wondered at his silence. 'He is thinking of mamma,' she said to herself.

'Papa,' at last she whispered.

Mr. Evelyn turned, and read his daughter's meaning in her inquiring smile.

'Yes, my child, I was dreaming of your mother,

but not exclusively. Emmeline, you shall share a secret that we laid up in our souls ; by mutual consent we never spoke of it save once a year, when the day that gave it us came round.'

Emmeline did not reply, save by a gentle pressure of his hand.

'It is on this very day, at this very hour, sixteen years ago, that your brother was borne away from us by just such a stream as that!'

'My brother, papa! my brother? I never heard of him before.'

'Your brother, Emmeline. As you are sitting there, so he sat that night, sixteen years ago : when bending over the stern he fell overboard, and, floating quickly off, was beyond the reach of help ere help could be obtained. The captain and first mate restrained me by force, or I had surely followed him—his cry—but ah! these are bitter memories! Your mother was in the cabin, sitting with you in her arms at the stern port-hole, admiring the glowing path upturned by the rudder, when a swiftly-descending object for an instant intercepted the light, and ere she could ascertain what that object was, her boy was distant from her. You were a babe not two years old.'

Then Mr. Evelyn entered on all the terrible detail, and explained why he and his wife had kept from Emmeline the knowledge of her brother's former existence and untimely fate.



After Mr. Evelyn had remained a short time in his sister's family, he determined on making a tour, partly with the view of renovating his strength, and partly to give himself ample scope for choice of a healthy locality in which to home his daughter and himself. Emmeline stayed with Mrs. D'Urban, in order to share her cousin's lessons in the French and German languages, and in the use of the harp.

An attachment, that proved an after source of joy and sorrow to the girls, was soon formed between them. The introduction of these cousins to each other was one of the gentle ministrations of Providence, by which God anticipates the needs of his feeble ones, and prepares for adversities as yet a great way off. Emmeline made quite a pet of Bridget, who was content to be thought the younger, 'or anything,' so long as she might nestle her head on her cousin, and look up with those arch, fun-loving eyes at the sweet face so ever prompt with a responsive smile to meet the pleasant sallies on her ungirlish sedateness.

Once, when Bridget thus leaned on her cousin's lap, she exclaimed—

'I can't think how I came to be such a goose!' and then explained, by telling Emmeline all she had pictured of her before they had met.

'You see, people have such stupid ideas about your country; they fancy the kangaroos are the

only dancing-masters, and the parrots the only singing-mistresses. I wonder, Em, you have half the patience to answer such questions as the folks put to you ; and yet I don't wonder, either, at what *you* do, or at what you don't do. Em, do you know I should be the first to scold if you turned madcap. I would not but have you as you are for all the fun in the world.'

A kiss on her sunny brow was the only answer Bridget obtained or wanted ; she had a way of rattling out all her thoughts in the form of questions. Conformable to this way she rattled on—

'Tell me, Em, what made you so religious. Mamma says it's your delicate health, and that delicate persons are always more pious than others ; and I don't like that : people have no business to be religious just because they can't be anything else ; have they, Em ? I'll never believe that's your case. I think you were *born* religious.'

To her surprise, instead of the expected smile, she perceived a solemn sadness in Emmeline's face. She was up in an instant.

'Why, Em ! I've vexed you ; surely you are not angry with little Racket ? It's only a fair question of ways and means.'

This was uttered with such comic seriousness, that Em was obliged to laugh in spite of herself ; when Bridget, being satisfied that she had not really

mortified her cousin, sat down again, and in a more quiet mood, asked—

‘Em, will you really tell me? I had a long battle with mamma and George about it the other day, and though they silenced me they could not convince me.’

‘Which of your many questions am I to answer, Bridget?’

‘Are delicate persons always religious?’

‘Would God that they were! and we should not have so many prescriptions for hours of ennui, and nights of restlessness! I quite apprehend aunt’s meaning, though. There are few persons so irrational, or so self-torturing, as to venture resistance to that which is irresistible. A politic acquiescence in an evil beyond control, is the least that can be offered; and too many are content to yield this least by sinking into a quietude of manner which again degenerates into apathy towards passing events, mistaken by themselves and others for a lowly submission to God’s will and a religious disregard to the trifles of time.’

There was unusual fervour in her voice, and a brighter colour in her cheek than Bridget had before observed, as she continued—

‘But believe me, Bridget, true religion is not to be mistaken; you may think it is in a person in whom it does not really exist; but never—never can you be ignorant of its presence where

it is truly to be found. There is as much difference between the apathy of unblest sickness and the resignation of piety, as between the unsteady flicker of a lamp and the clear light of day. True piety is never apathetic! Whether on a bed of death, or whether in a sphere of action, it is never oblivious to the interests of others. Physical weakness may disable it, circumstance may discourage it; but neither can touch its vital principle or change the unselfishness of its nature. With it, a setting of its affections on things above, does not mean a steeling of its sympathies to things on earth.'

Mrs. D'Urban entered the room at this moment, and noticing the brilliancy of Emmeline's cheeks, exclaimed—

'If all Methodists look as well as you do now, Emmy, I should not mind turning Bridget into one forthwith. What has sent all those roses to your face?'

'I fancy your entrance, dear aunt,' said Emmeline, rising, and kissing her affectionately; 'I did not feel them there until now.'

'Oh!' cried the aunt, laughing, 'I hoped they were the fruition of methodism, for which, I assure you, I begin to entertain a profound respect, seeing how much its influence has tamed my wild Bridget; she begins to have an occasional thought for others, now.'

‘Oh, aunt? Bridget’s charity is all set to music; but it is not the less charity, for that.’

‘She really is a lovely girl; one would not have looked for such a gentlewoman from those wild parts,’ thought Mrs. D’Urban, unable to divest herself of the D’Urban prejudices, and uncaring to discover whether that beautiful country she so designated were in reality as wild and incapable of producing flowers of human beauty as she supposed.

A few days after the conversation above related, on going unexpectedly into Emmeline’s private apartment, Bridget found her cousin reclining on a sofa, suffering much pain in her side. She had time to mark how severe the spasm appeared, before her entrance caused Emmeline to disguise her pain beneath a smile of welcome, accompanied by the assurance that the attack was nothing; its frequency of recurrence had made her notice it but slightly.

‘Emmeline, you are ill; that smile cannot deceive me; it means a great —, and goes for nothing with little Racket. Does uncle know of these attacks?’

‘Why should I trouble him, love? aunt says they are only growing-pains.’

‘Growing-pains, indeed! I guess you had your last of them before you made mamma’s acquaintance. Now I will turn tell-tale unless you promise to lie still until luncheon bell.’

With this threat, Bridget left her cousin, and proceeded to take her first voluntary step into the shadowy side of life. Entering her own sanctum, she locked the door, and seating herself at her desk, wrote to Mr. Evelyn—

‘MY DEAR UNCLE HERBERT,

‘I do not wish to frighten you, but feel constrained to tell you, that *I* (mind, nobody else) think dear Em is ill. I found her just now severely suffering in her side; and though she tried to laugh off her feeling, I could not help being much alarmed. You will best know whether or not there is cause for anxiety. If not, do not let this note worry you, and forgive

‘Your loving niece,

‘BRIDGET D’URBAN.’

The letter was written, sealed, stamped, and despatched, before Bridget recollected that she should have sought her mother’s advice and approval before sending it. All in a flutter, she ran to Mrs. D’Urban, and told her how she discovered poor Em, and what she had, in consequence, done. But not the ingenuous confession nor the repentant tears of her daughter softened Mrs. D’Urban’s wrath.

‘What will your uncle say, miss, at receiving a sly warning from you, instead of a summons from myself? As if *I* should not be the *first* to remark

a change in dear Emmeline. Sit down directly, you thoughtless girl, and tell my brother that I will watch Emmeline very closely, and inform him as to her health.'

So, with many sighs of sincere sorrow for having vexed her mother, little Racket wrote a second time to Uncle Herbert.

Thus did her first voluntary step into the shadowy side of life receive a check—one that was long remembered, not as a stone of stumbling, but as a prudent waymark, cautioning her to *look* before she advanced into a path of which she knew but little.

As was intended, Mr. Evelyn received both wound and balm together. He laid more stress on Bridget's extempore communication than on that which came from his sister's dictation. He placed more reliance on Bridget's report than on Mrs. D'Urban's, knowing, from experience of his sister, that those large, strong women, who have never needed to coax debility in themselves, nor learnt to detect any one of its thousand features in their children, are seldom quick to discern symptoms of incipient disease which may be wearing out the existence of less hardy subjects.

Two days from the despatch of the letters, Mr. Evelyn sat by his child, and his tutored sight read deeper meaning in the roses of her cheek and the lustre of her eye, than had revealed itself to

Mrs. D'Urban. He saw in the enfeebled frame that bowed its head upon his shoulder more than the indulged relaxation of youthful indolence.

Three days from the despatch of the letters, Mr. Evelyn heard his fears realised by medical opinion, and decided to follow the physician's advice, and return with Emmeline to Tasmania, as much to give her the benefit of a sea voyage as to try what her almost native air might accomplish for her. On the evening of that day, Mr. Evelyn was closeted with his brother-in-law and sister for more than three hours, and when he came from conference with them, it was only to commence another with Emmeline, and then to begin a third with Bridget. We overheard the result of the three conferences, when the noisy, racketing Bridget flew into her cousin's room, and exclaimed, ere the door had time to slam after her—

‘I may go! They'll let me go with you!’

Then flinging herself into Emmeline's arms, she forgot the nearer prospect of rows in the kitchen in her joy at being companion elect to the being she loved best in the world.



## CHAPTER X.

## THE LIE.

THE soul that has wandered from the path of rectitude and virtue, is fain to take refuge in borrowed excellence, and to receive by proxy that applause which conscience will not permit it to accept itself.

It is to just such a spotless being as Mary Doveton that the sated worldling prostrates himself in unfeigned adoration. It is her very retreating purity that attracts him. He has been behind the scenes of dissipation, and pulled the gaudy tinsel from the idol of his passion, and a laugh of bitter irony has mocked his disappointment when he beheld all false and cold within.

He gazes on the white simplicity of her spirit, and the transparency of its attiring affords no concealment. The inner loveliness is that of a perpetual childhood, and he longs to draw the veil of her unsullied innocence over his own misshapen heart.

He has drunk to the very dregs the purple cup

of wantonness, which, while it palled his senses, has not allayed his thirst. The clear, taintless water of the fountain sparkles in the gracefull crystal; it is so pure he can look through it and see the heavens beyond. He is maddened to remember his rejected birthright, and would give the world to stretch forth his hand and grasp the inviting crystal to baptize his polluted soul in the refreshing draught.

Norwell! Norwell! where is *she* that would have been all to you that now you seek and need? Where is she, who, when you needed truth to hide your own falsehood, could have unbarred her own heart, and, with unflinching voice, bade you search there and detect one equivocating thought? Where is she, who for beauty could have outshone Mary Doveton—for innocence could have stood her equal?

True, you quailed beneath the haughty stare of the one; but never, never, Norwell, until you had learnt to fear its reproofs by teaching it your own base weakness. It could have been taught to look as lovingly on you as the large, soft eye of the other, beneath whose witching tenderness you now yearn to abrogate the past. Where is she who is now only what *you* have made her?

Was she not worthy of your confidence? was she not willing to repay your counterfeit with love's true gold? True, you have need to shelter

yourself within some shrine of sanctity; but ere you fell so deeply, was not *that* heart an altar meet to shield you? or when you had fallen so deeply as to drag it in your fall, was it not supremely fair above the darkness of your sin? Was it not more noble in its faded glory than ever your deserts? No, no; the wretch who commits sacrilege upon the goodly altar, has no thought to screen his guilt beneath that altar. One free from his pollution can only suffice for him. So he spurns his victim at her own shrine, and departing, flings the ashes of her virtue in her face. And God gathers the ashes into his censer of vengeance. Woe the day when He shall pour the heaped wrath upon that mocker's head!

Call in the sisters of charity. Call in that sex to whom has been offered a common insult. Bid them that they chide, but not roughly, for the arrow of conviction already rankles in their sister's heart. Bid them look on her with a sadness in their eye, but let her not discover a loathing in their touch. She has fallen but *once*, and must that be for ever? Though great her fall, may she not arise and stand upright—the arm of their pity assisting her in the effort? for effort, ay! struggling effort it must be. Her self-dependence is wounded, and refuses to let her lift so much as her eyes towards heaven. Her reliance is on *them*, those sisters of charity. Bid them but tell her she may

arise, and she will be strong in their strength; or otherwise she must sink—sink—sink, until her ruin stare them in the face; for though at their bidding she may arise, she may not lie still at their behest. With her it must be either upward or downward, for sin has given the blow and there is cruel inertia in her case. For heaven's sake call them in, those sisters of mercy! They all have passed upon the other side; they have gone to feed the hungry and clothe the naked; they are sisters of charity *not* of sin.

Then, for heaven's sake, again go tell them that this is not a sinner of the hardened herd. Her heart is yet flexible, and may be moulded to their liking. Innocence has been wronged, and the villain has fled. She may be rescued from the less pampered ruffian who may shortly come by. Tell them she has but this *once* transgressed, and *that* this very moment. She finds it harder to forgive herself than ever they may feel it difficult to pardon her. Tell them that to-morrow it may be too late. There are those who will not shun her as a reprobate, but hail her as an associate. Shame may drive her to them to hide in their outlawdom her one act of lawlessness. To-morrow may be too late. Pangs of hunger have to be anticipated—prevent those pangs with tender mercies, or justice will follow them with punishment. Hunger may to-morrow prompt her to

barter her soul for a mouthful of bread, or tempt her to stake her liberty on a stolen morsel.

Tell them, those sisters of charity, that not one of yonder blushless women but could once have looked them in the face; not one but has mourned her first sin, and that sin being branded on her drove her to hide individuality in a crowd, and to lose herself in a class.

Not one of those blushless women was born to accomplish the fearful story her life presents; not one was issued into earth an incarnated iniquity. But few have determinately gone over to the ranks of perdition. Many have gone over because they feared to be hooted over; and still more have been triumphantly borne over by temptation, the only Samaritan that came by when they had dropped by the roadside. He bore them forward, but, reversing the good old story, left *them* to pay the reckoning.

They have passed on—the sisters of mercy; they are sisters of charity, *not* of sin, or, at any rate, of *that* sin which claims them as its special pleader.

One sister of mercy has returned: she would put a question—

‘Is it not for the common good that we spurn that dark sin of woman? Were *we* to remove the life-long ban, the other sex would not be slow to second our movement. Then would that sin stalk

barefaced in the sunshine, and what remedy could we produce ?

We are not careful, O sister, to answer thee in this matter. When the necessity upsprings, then Providence will suggest the cure ; but millennial day will dawn ere then, ushering in a system so Christ-like in its forgiveness, and bringing its weeping Magdalens to replace thy despair-made Rahabs, flaunting in the gates of thy spurning system. Pass on, O priest and Levite ! pass by, O sister of charity ! on rideth one who will not be slothful to perform your rejected duty. The hostelry of sin lies over yonder, and his agents are abroad in the earth.

Norwell had no sooner caught a last glimpse of Maida's veiled figure in the railway carriage, and assisted in moving Mr. Gwynnham from the platform, than, weary, dejected, and self-loathing, he hurried to his apartment in the hotel, locked the door, and flung himself on the sofa, and there confounded himself unsparingly as a fool, coward, and every other name signifying evil. Then was it that, after thinking of Mary Doveton, he put those questions to himself recorded in the first page of this chapter ; and very faithfully did he answer them—so faithfully, that, being without excuse, he started from the sofa with—

‘Confound it ! it's done and can't be undone—at least, it can't be undone without the sacrifice of myself, and that, of course, must never be. After

all, poor Maida is the dupe of the law and not of me. The cheque has nothing to do with her present punishment, if it had—curse it—what a fool a fellow's thoughts make him! Who's there?

‘A note for you, sir.’

‘Confound it—an invitation.’

Captain Norwell threw it on the table, and then, with a brightened countenance, caught it up again, exclaiming—

‘It's the old hag of the assize ball. Ten chances to one I meet that angel there!’

He forthwith accepted the invitation, and then fell to thinking of that angel called by us Mary Doveton. Were it a possibility that from a corrupt mind could proceed one sinless thought, we should say that it was with such a thought Norwell stood afar, and worshipped Miss Doveton. He would have struck to the earth the man who dared to utter an impure word of her.

His impatience made him one of the earliest at the party. No Doveton had arrived, and he was beginning to change the ten chances into one, when, leaning on her father's arm, his angel entered. The simple morning robe had been changed for as simple an evening dress. The flowers at her bosom, and the wreath of real moss-rose buds looping her golden hair, were the only ornaments that significantly relieved the whiteness of her attire.

We leave to be imagined how intense was Norwell's delight when, after many fruitless efforts to gain Miss Doveton's attention, he observed a certain indication of pleasure in the smile of recognition that brought him immediately to her side to hear the delicious salutation—

‘I am quite glad to meet you, Captain Norwell. I have for some time been wishing for this opportunity.’

The smile told him much that he had been anxious to ascertain. It told him that Mary could have heard no prejudicial report of his character; that her contact with Maida had not been injurious to a hope he ventured to indulge in; and it told him she had been thinking of him, and that, for some reason or other, she wanted to see him. Any reason that could induce such a wish in her was welcome to his heart.

‘May I be honoured with Miss Doveton's commands?’ bowed Captain Norwell.

The answer was a shock of pleasure, too exquisite but for silent enjoyment.

‘I have a message for you, that I must deliver alone.’

And with a simplicity all her own, Mary Dove ton walked towards the bow-window, looking the while at Norwell, as much as to say, ‘Will you follow?’ an injunction he had obeyed ere he fully appreciated its worth.



Nestling in among the flowers with which the window was decorated, she looked up from their midst into Norwell's face, and said—

‘I hope, as Miss Fletcher is not here to object to its dulness, you will not dislike to resume a subject we talked of at the assize ball?’

‘No topic that Miss Doveton chooses can be dull,’ replied Norwell, making a conventional phrase the sincere exponent of his feelings.

The message from Maida, as delivered by Miss Doveton, ‘to the benevolent gentleman,’ was at first rather uncomfortable in its effects on him. ‘The benevolent gentleman’ received it as though it had been a sting. But guileless Mary saw nothing remarkable in his uneasy manner of darting the question—

‘What name did you say, Miss Doveton?’

Mary faithfully observed her promise to Maida, with regard to her alias, and therefore repeated—

‘Martha Grylls; the poor woman for whom you expressed yourself so kindly—by gesture, rather than by speech, I should say—you remember?’

‘Ah! yes; that’s the name—poor thing! It was very kind of you to think of telling her; and very touching that she should be grateful for so slight a sympathy—from a stranger too.’

‘Ah, Captain Norwell, we never know where the benefit of a soothing word or look may end.

Your pity found its way to ease a wounded spirit. Martha seemed to feel it deeply.'

'Not exactly as *my* pity. I suppose, Miss Doveton, she would hardly distinguish between one and another stranger's compassion?'

'Certainly not. I could not recollect your name; so merely spoke of you as an individual who had displayed sorrow for her suffering.'

'And to *that* individual she sent her thanks,' said Captain Norwell.

'Yes; and to *that* individual they will not be the less acceptable because they come unlabelled. The heart that can identify them is the heart to claim the thanks, Captain Norwell.'

There was a gentle archness in Miss Doveton's eye, as it rested on 'the benevolent gentleman,' in silent approval of his modesty; but it was unnoticed. The gentleman was watching a leaf, whose zig-zag descent appeared to absorb his attention, for only when it dropped to the ground did he turn to his companion with—

'Was Martha Grylls communicative? To most persons, I hear, she was very reserved; doubtless she warmed into confidence towards *you*.'

'I had no desire to learn her secret; in visiting her I had no intention of seeking to know her history; but think I gained her confidence, poor dear.'

‘She volunteered her confidence, then, Miss Doveton?’

‘Yes; and I value it the more on that account,’ naïvely replied Mary.

‘Confound her confidence!’ thought Norwell, as he sought in his forehead for a missing idea, which having found, he blandly asked—

‘The confidence, of course, is sacred, Miss Doveton; without violating its sanctity, may I hear your opinion of Martha Grylls, founded on *her* version of her unfortunate case?’

Mary seemed perplexed.

‘We misunderstand each other, Captain Norwell. I am ignorant of her story, excepting of that portion for which she is now in punishment. In saying I gained her confidence, I mean, that I induced her to talk freely of her feelings, and to tell me the thoughts of her heart. She was very guarded on the subject you allude to. Oh! Captain Norwell, I wish you had seen that woman. I know, of course, the law is right, and should not be partial; but it is hard to believe Martha capable of such a crime, unless under the influence of severe mental agony, which does not appear to have been the case.’

‘Will you permit me to put a stop to this conversation? I am inefficiently fulfilling my duty as a guest in allowing a cloud to gather on a lady’s brow. Shall we join the company?’

‘It is easier to drive a cloud from the brow than from the heart, Captain Norwell;’ and a half-heaved sigh gave emphasis to her words.

‘Miss Doveton should have neither,’ mechanically responded Norwell, as he shook hands with her father, who had advanced to meet him. Escaped from the severe mental flagellation which Miss Doveton had unconsciously inflicted on him, and convinced that Maida had borne him harmless, Norwell was again at liberty to worship the lily of purity his imagination had deified. More than ever conscious of the disparity between himself and it, it seemed that this path of approach had been deceptive, and left him many paces more distant from the lily. While regretfully scanning this distance, he suddenly perceived an advantage offered him by his very sin. Maida herself disclosed the step by which he could reach the lovely presence. A well-continued show of sympathy and interest for the prisoner might gradually act on Mary Doveton’s unsuspecting mind, and cause it to conceive an esteem for one who could feel so acutely for a fellow creature in distress; and this esteem being conveyed to her susceptible heart, might eventually change to love. This show of sympathy might be at once grateful to his own disquietude, which required relief in some form, and useful to disguise a certain troubled expression which his countenance

assumed when his thoughts were left to prey on themselves.

But the task was more difficult than Norwell had anticipated. The difficulty lay not with Mary. Perjured as were Norwell's lips, he found it strangely hard to form upon them the lie with which he purposed to win Miss Doveton.

The assassin's blow is dealt in the dark, when the victim's back is turned upon his murderer. There can be few assassins relentless enough to strike death, where death is innocently welcomed with smiles and open arms. When Mary beamed a welcome upon Norwell, he deferred to repay that welcome with a falsehood; and when, at last, he could venture it utterance, it stumbled on his tongue, and fell—where do you think? to the earth? No; into Mary's heart.

His very difficulty subserved his cause; it endeared him to Mary, whose eye, being single, was full of truth.

There was only a maidenly blush upon her cheek, and love's own tremble upon her lips, when she laid her small white hand on Norwell, and whispered—

'I have loved you, Norwell, since that day.'—And the eye, so full of truth, saw nothing to be ashamed of in thus giving answer to a love so humbly offered, so worthy of acceptance; but, with all its gentle power, it reflected her simple state-

ment,—‘I have loved you, Norwell, since that day.’

His blanched features show untold feeling, as he receives the guileless troth.

Is it well, sweet Mary, to clothe thy speech with irony? Is it well to plant the secret thorn in thy surpassing gift? Thy God’s grandest character is that of the upbraidless giver. Be like Him.

‘It *is* well,’ says Mary; ‘I have loved him since that day.’ And there is wonder in her tone, as she would say—

Why deal in proverbs?

## CHAPTER XI.

## ‘THE ROSE OF BRITAIN.’

BECALMED on the tropical sea, two vessels lay listlessly lulling their weary passengers to a noon-day sleep—a sleep that had anything but a soothing effect on the slumberers, who, ever and anon, would start, and in their uneasy rest implore, Dives-like, for a drop of water to cool their parching tongue—a petition that would either never reach steward, or else be answered with an ag-grieved shake of the head.

‘Can’t do it—had your allowance;’ and steward gulps down a large cupful of cold tea which he has obtained by laying a toll on each dish of tea served at that morning’s breakfast.

But steward has his favourites on board; and whilst his stewardship is inexorably faithful to some, he turns his pregnable side towards others, and this pregnable side holds his not deaf ear; an ear which quickly distinguishes whether the petitioner is one of his favoured few, or one who kicked up a bother about his tureen of soup, or

told the captain that his cabin was only swabbed, and not holy-stoned. Discerning the cry of a favourite, with stealthy movements he proceeds to quench the cry in a draught of some refreshing beverage; now it may be a glass of cold coffee—now it may be a glass of ale, left over from last night's supper—and then, oh, best of all! it may be a bumper of cold, milkless, sugarless tea. None but those who have tried the delights of this draught in tropical extremities can tell how truly grateful above any porter or beer is this cold tea. Steward himself is a regular toper, and yet he declares that give him your tea he'll give you his tap. But even the pregnable side of steward rarely yields literal water; he will hardly risk detection, and the consequent charge of favouritism, by granting the letter of the petition. He has orders to draw only so much water from the tank, therefore he dares not disobey. 'A drop of something left from meals captain can't swear against;' neither can he swear at steward for generously giving that drop of something away. To steward's honour be it said, young ladies are always his particular fancy, for two reasons, namely, 'for their own dear selves' sake,' and because they don't give so much trouble as the gentlemen—they make their own beds, and keep their cabins tidy. Any young lady with a passable face and an amount of good nature sufficient to make her



affable with steward, may have a pleasant voyage. For though captain governs, and mates sub-govern, it is the steward who holds the rein of comfort or discomfort; plague him, and you'll have a hundred annoyances which do not come under a captain's rule, or even knowledge—annoyances which can be so easily traced to natural causes, that of course steward must not be blamed for them any more than you or I.

All ye who value such alleviation as tropical miseries admit of, curry favour with the steward. All ye who appreciate winter consolations, in the form of hot sea-water bottles and aromatic caudles, curry favour with the steward, ere the biting cold of the Horn nip your very heart, and freeze your best feelings into one lugubrious mass of neighbour hatred.

All we have said of petitions, either gratified or denied, applies in the present case to but one of the vessels.

Both lay listlessly lulling their passengers—and the passengers of both were equally willing to be lulled—equally weary and feverish—equally anxious to snuff a breath of air—equally tired of the ardent sky staring down upon them, relentless as the eye of conscience upon the bad man's soul. Here ended the similarity, save that both were outward bound. When the two vessels were within speaking distance, the master of the vessel

of which we have been writing hoisted his signals, and displayed his black board, receiving in answer the announcement that the other ship was (from) London (to) Van Diemen's Land (with) prisoners.

Three words, which told a life's time tale of sorrow.

The vessels shifted still nearer each other, by lazy, who-may-care degrees, until an unusual state of excitement on board proclaimed that the two captains were about to exchange civilities through their trumpets.

The deck of the prison ship was crowded with prisoners—as a mass of brown serge distinctly visible; but from that mass to distinguish individuals required the help of the mate's telescope, looking through which was recognisable one figure whose tall and dignified form could be no other than Maida Gwynnham.

She stood at the bulwarks near the stern, and leaning on her was one who in the distance seemed a mere child, so small was she in comparison with Maida; yet, small as she was, she had on the prison serge and cap—this fact was discernible without the telescope's aid. On nearer view, her features were those of a young girl of fifteen years. She clung to Maida as an infant clings to its parent, following her with a quick uneasy step whenever she changed her position, and not seeming satisfied unless drawn close to her pro-

tector's side by the intertwining of her own and Maida's arm; then she appeared not to care how long she stood and watched the strange vessel.

In the free vessel was a group, which, as a group, was visible to the naked eye—to use an astronomical phrase—but to distinguish the individuals forming it, the captain needed his glass. There were three persons: a tall, slight gentleman, of an aspect decidedly clerical, a young lady, who sat on a camp-stool supported against the mizen, and a second young lady, whose clear, musical voice rang over the water as the trumpets conveyed their shrill messages backwards and forwards. So musical a laugh could only be Bridget D'Urban's. It rang right over to the poor child-prisoner, who, all against her will, laughed an answer to the merry voice; and Maida smiled a sad smile as she heard the youthful captive send back that miserable imitation, and yet she felt glad that the poor thing could laugh even such a laugh; the girl perceived the smile and feared it was a rebuke.

'I couldn't help it, Maida,' she said, apologetically; 'it came so sweet and different from our women's great noises.'

Maida pressed her arm still more tightly around little Lucy. The Reverend Mr. Evelyn also heard Lucy's response to his niece's cheery heart-mirth, and an expression that Emmeline had

learnt to interpret passed over his face ; he turned from her and paced the deck for an instant, then, stopping abruptly at her side, he said, in a hurried tone—

‘That was a child’s voice ! That ship is no place for so young a creature—they punish her soul as well as her body. They are teaching her sin by binding her to those who will instruct her well in their trade. And then she will get a series of severer punishments for proving an apt scholar in the school of vice to which she was only apprenticed to learn her own folly. She was put on board with a few years’ knowledge of crime—he will come off with the knowledge of fifty years, unless some providence interfere on her behalf.’

Mr. Evelyn was short-sighted, or he would surely have recollected the figure that stood opposite him on the deck of the transport ; had he looked through the telescope he could not have failed to discover Maida Gwynnham.

That Maida did not discover him is not to be wondered at, for never once did her eye stay its dreamy wandering into the fervid blue depths that lay, so tranquil, at her feet, until a rough hand grasped her shoulder, and a rougher voice demanded why she was later than her messmates—why had not she gone below with the other women ; and it went on to say, that she was no fit com-

panion for the girl Lucy Grenlow, and that if she continued such doings, she should be separated from her ; at which threat the poor Lucy clung still more child-like to Maida, and Maida grasped the trembling form still more firmly to herself.

A breeze up-sprung, and every stitch of sail was spread to atone for lost time. The two vessels, though bound for the same port, soon parted company. Shortly after the breeze had come to their relief, the news was spread that the log had been cast and they were going at the rate of seven knots an hour.

Thus met on the broad ocean two ships bearing those who were appointed to an after ble ding of thrilling interests—interests of life, interests of death, and never-dying interests. Thus parted they, for the moment fixed by Providence had not yet arrived. Thus on the ever-varying yet never-changing sea of life are tossed together by storm, or drifted together by calm, mortal barques, who meet, exchange sympathies, commingle hopes and fears, report past successes, and mourn future prospects. The stormy winds lull, or the prayed-for breezes blow, and, bound for their diverse course, the mortal barques spread sail, and it is a wonder where has fled the lively interest each felt for the other ; a transient glance, a slight watching of its disappearing fellow, and then, absorbed in its own career, each turns from each, and the horizon hides

them both, and neither cares to ask, Shall we ever meet again? What is decreed in the chart of futurity for her who an hour since sailed side by side with me over this mighty deep?

Maida had been on board the transport a fortnight before she was able to go on deck. The first morning that she took her place with the other women she noticed a small figure crouched up in a corner between two hen-coops on the leeward side. Her face was hidden low down in her lap; but by the jutting movements of the shoulder it was easy to tell that the little creature was sobbing violently.

'She'm gone to lo'urd because she won't fall no further,' giggled a horrid-looking female, whose appearance was rendered more repulsive by a shock of grizzled hair, which had been cropped, and was now shooting up in perpendicular wires all over her head, making her look something between a withered grown-up tomboy and an ex-lunatic. In defiance of rule she had taken off her cap. The matron was below, making up a recent quarrel with the surgeon-superintendent over a glass of wine, and simultaneously with her departure about sixty caps had disappeared from the multitude of shorn heads congregated on the deck of the 'Rose of Britain.'

It was Lucy Grenlow who sat crouched up in the corner: she was one of the few who kept on

their caps. As she bent her face more and more into her lap, she felt her cap twitched off, or, rather, an effort made to catch it off; but it was tied under her chin, so the twitch only raised her head with a jerk that let it fall more heavily into its covert.

‘Let the maid alone, can’t ye,’ cried the man at the wheel; ‘she’s a mere babby, and it’s only right she should cry after her mother, the poor thing; darn my living soul if ever I’ll come out with a prison-ship again.’

‘You hold your —— tongue, or I’ll give a point at the wheel for your insolence—a point that will set us a spinning in a trice.’

With this the ex-lunatic or withered tomboy grasped the whole of Lucy’s cap, together with the roots of her hair, and dragged her head up to the gaze of the herd.

‘Here’s a pretty face for you—lawk-a-me! shan’t she learn a thing or two from me before she leaves these precious boards? Yer, my dear, havn’t you got your passage dirt cheap, that’s all! only paid five shillings for it, and here I’ve been working for this lift for nigh thirty year, and haven’t got it till now. You’ll have to bless your country to the end of your life for such generosity. My husband’s been over there this ten year, and I’ve never been able to get over to un till now; he’ll hire me straight away as soon as my proba-

tion's out. I suppose I an't been as brave as you, my little darling, for fortin favours the brave, they says, and her an't a-favoured me till now, goodness knows.'

All this while she held poor Lucy's head dragged backwards; the face was wet with tears, but the child tried hard not to burst out afresh; she even tried to smile, an attempt that destroyed her powers of endurance. By force she wrested herself from the brutal grasp, and with one loud wail, 'Mother! mother!' sank upon the board, cutting a deep gash in her forehead by the fall.

In an instant she was in Maida's arms, and would have been there much sooner had Maida known the cruel tyranny that was being exercised upon her. Absorbed in her own grief, and wasted by her own weakness, she had retreated to the further end of the deck, unwitting that a labour of love awaited her even in that den of infamy. It had not entered her mind that there was a possibility of a child-prisoner's existence amongst so aged a set of convicts; therefore, nursing her own sorrow, she was dreaming away the first morning of her deliverance from sea-sickness, when casting her eyes to leeward she saw the imbruted woman drag back that youthful head. She started immediately to her feet; but, unaccustomed to the motion of the vessel, had to make several endeavours ere she could walk. During the last of



those endeavours the girl's cry gave momentary strength to her limbs, and she almost darted to the spot. Her first impulse was to strike down the wretched creature; but by an instant perception of the more effective course, when the first buzz of excitement had died into that perfect hush which generally follows an accident brought on by foul means, she turned to the woman, and pointing towards Lucy, said—

‘That child henceforth is mine; touch her at your peril.’

No one voice replied.

Maida waited a few moments, and looked with naughty quiet from one to the other of the scowling faces before her, to see if any would dare forbid the act of appropriation. But no resistance was made.

As she prepared to descend with her senseless burden, all feared she would tell the matron; and a deputation of women went forward to beg her not to peach.

Maida listened with impatience to the odd mixture of oaths, petitions, threats, promises, by which the deputation beleaguered her; and when their vociferations let her get in a word, she said, with an air of dignity strangely unaccordant with the tumultuous manners of her rude auditory—

‘Telling will not recall the past; and until I perceive a danger of a similar act of cruelty, I

shall not demean myself by punishing the offender.’

There was something so different to themselves in the speaker, that none ventured to gainsay her words to herself; but no sooner was she out of hearing, than hitherto repressed wrath broke out in fearful imprecations and vulgar jeers.

‘*I*, indeed! Who’s this mighty *I* come in amongst us all to a sudden, and all because of that little devil, Grenlow?’ said one of the enraged throng, envious of a superiority she could not but award Maida Gwynnham in the depths of her heart.

‘I guess this lady will have to swallow her gentility in the box one o’ these days if she kicks up her guineas to the doctor,’ hoped a second.

A volley of curses from a third pretended to show her opinion of the intruder.

‘I reckon we shan’t be bothered much with her a bit, for the darned hypocrite ’ll sure to be ill, and that ’ooman will sure for to scheme to get ’pointed her nurse; you see if she don’t get the blind eye of the chap.’ (short for chaplain), exclaimed a-fourth.

The ex-lunatic alone remained silent: her grizzled hair stood more perversely erect, like a forest of ill thoughts from her head. There was a secret vowing of vengeance in her lowering brow and clenched teeth, as she shook her fist towards where the victim of her taunts had fallen. Turning

sullenly away she was about to go below, when the man at the wheel, just removed from his post, after assuring himself that no Argus was near to detect his breach of rule—first mate being forward, second mate off his watch, and captain at his dinner, called to the women to hearken a moment to his advice, which he gave as follows:—

‘If ye be wise, all on ye, this is the thing ye’ll do. That woman’s a brick—a real, livin,’ rantin’ brick; and to prove it I’d marry her down straight away for the beauty of her two eyes, or else go down to Davey’s locker, if she wasn’t a convict. Well, I’d have ye all keep in with her, or ye’ll get the worst on it afore ye’ve done with her. You go straight away and elect her your queen, says I, and ye’ll have some un worth standin’ by; so good-bye all on ye, wise ones;’ with an admonitory flourish off made honest Jack, just in time to save his grog. Now as this advice coincided with the unexpressed feeling of each prisoner, all agreed that there was sense in Jack’s sermint; and as there was no good in making an enemy where a friend could be gained, it was unanimously carried that Maida Gwynnham should be convict queen; though each voter privately hated her for the superiority which all were obliged to own, while they publicly abhorred Lucy Grenlow as the cause of the brawl which had exalted Maida Gwynnham to her honourable (?) position.

The fourth woman's "prediction" was correct. Maida had no sooner laid Lucy in her berth than she sought the chaplain, and asked him to use his influence in trying to get her appointed nurse ; and the chaplain was successful.

The little convict had been ailing for many days ; the morning's accident, therefore, was worse in its effects than might otherwise have been. She lay unconscious for a long time ; and when, after a few uneasy tossings and half-sighed groans, she at last opened her eyes, it was only to look bewilderingly about and cry—

'Mother ! mother ! I am so bad.'

'Are you, my poor child ?' said the murderess, tenderly, as she laid her hand on the sufferer's burning temples.

'That's nice ; that's like you did when I had the fever, mother ; I was feerd you were gone. Don't go, don't go, oh, don't go !'

'I promised to tell the doctor when you awoke, dear ; I will not be away an instant,' whispered Maida, soothingly.

But the sick girl would not relinquish her hold of Maida's hand ; so the convict nurse knelt down by the berth, and let her hand stay quietly in the fevered grasp of her poor young charge, whilst she kept the other hand on her forehead, now turning the palm, now the back of it, as its surface absorbed the heat from the parched skin of her brow.

‘Mother, you b’lieve about the five shillings, don’t you? Them gentlemen to court said ’twas all fibs; you b’lieve, don’t you?’

‘I believe every word you tell me, Lucy. But you must not talk whilst you are so poorly.’

‘Will father beat me again if he catches me?’ A shiver ran through her whole frame and lingered at her fingers’ ends, until Maida pressed her hands gently between her own in order to stay the nervous trembling.

‘No; father will never beat you again. There, lay your head on my arm; now you need not fear.’

‘What’s this?’ cried Lucy, suddenly starting bolt upright, as something trickled down her cheek. She touched it, and found it was blood. She gazed at the crimson stain for a moment, and then asked, in a mysterious voice—

‘Is that what I heard tell about to Sunday-school; the blood—what is it?—that cleanses from all sin?’

Maida wiped the trickling drops from her cheek, and said—

‘I have heard of that blood; it will cleanse *your* sin, Lucy.’

‘*You* haven’t got no sins to cleanse, mother.’

‘It will wash away *your* sins,’ calmly answered Maida.

‘Oh, don’t, mother, don’t! I know I’ve been

very wicked ; but I meant, indeed I did, for to put back the five shillings when I got paid.'

'I am sure you did, poor dear.'

Maida's heart was full to bursting ; but no outer sign of sorrow was visible in the tutored features that bent over the invalid ; pity, almost anguished pity was there, but no single token betrayed the mighty grief which buried deep, deep in the sanctuary beneath.

'Say it, mother, that what I heard tell about at Sunday-school — the blood, what is it? — my thoughts are all gone.'

'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,' said the Religious Instructor, solemnly. He had heard the latter part of Lucy's wanderings ; and, more with a view to Maida than the delirious patient, seized the opportunity to proclaim the tidings of a Saviour's death to one whom he considered an *extra*-ordinary sinner.

The old look of indifference immediately obliterated all trace of feeling from her face.

'Would that I could see some expression there,' thought the Instructor, as he met the passionless marble of Maida's countenance turned towards him.

Did Maida read the thought, that her lip curled into a line of scorn ? But only for an instant ; the scorn changed into a smile, for Lucy seemed about to speak.

‘’Tisn’t father, is it? Mother, don’t leave go; it can’t be father, he don’t talk nothing about the blood. Who is it, mother?’

The Religious Instructor beckoned that he would answer. Drawing close to the berth, he repeated—

‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.’

‘No, no!’ said Lucy, in the fretful accent of delirium; ‘no, no! I want mother to say it.’

Maida trembled; there was expression enough in her countenance then.

The sick child looked imploringly at her; the murderess could not resist the silent appeal. Averting her head from the Instructor, with thrilling distinctness she pronounced—

‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.’

‘Not yours, mother; you an’t got no sin; you didn’t steal five shillings.’

Maida did not answer; but delirious people *will* be answered; hence the difficulty in treating their whims.

‘Not yours, mother! Mother, not yours?’

‘No—not mine,’ came the fearful reply.

‘’Cause you an’t got none. Only me that’s wicked;’ and with a wild, shrill laugh the sick child clapped her hands, and sank back on her pillow, tired with the exertion.

‘And why not *yours*, my poor woman?’ asked

the Instructor, in a very kindly voice. ‘ May not the *all* reach even your case ?’

‘ As one of your charge, sir, I am bound to listen to you ; but I do not prefer discussion ; it only tends to strengthen the natural prejudice of the heart.’

‘ I have no wish to discuss, Martha Grylls ; that is no part of my duty. I have but one desire, and that is to preach Christ to you and your fellow sinners. Oh, Martha ! what would I not give to see you awake to the peril of your soul ! The sinner’s soul is always in danger ; but in your case danger is increased tenfold. What if we had gone down in last week’s storm ? where would then your soul have been ? where would it be now ? Martha, you have a weight of guilt—unredeemed guilt upon your life. Should that life be snatched away, the guilt would sink your soul to hell—yes, nothing but hell is before you.’

‘ Very comforting !’ said Maida, quietly folding her heart’s secret still more securely to the innermost recesses of her bosom. ‘ The chaplain of the gaol had peculiar pleasure in this point of God’s mercy, but it fails to win me.’

‘ “ Because I have called and ye have refused, I will also laugh at your calamity.” Martha, should death overtake you unawares, this would be your case,’ exclaimed the Instructor, earnestly. ‘ Look at that poor child ; hers is a small sin compared



with yours, yet see how it haunts her conscience. If she has such inward torment, what would yours be if you were laid on a bed of death? How could you face your Judge were you now to appear at his bar?’

‘Does He measure sin by its amount do you suppose, sir?’ asked Maida, so innocently that the good man hoped he had at last aroused her interest; he did not observe the calm defiance in the eye that watched for his explanation of Divine purpose.

‘That is dangerous ground, my woman; it is enough for us to know that all sin is hateful to God.’

‘I beg your pardon, sir,’ interrupted Maida, very coldly but very politely, ‘it may be enough for *you* to know; my emergency being greater, I naturally wish to ascertain more of future probabilities.’

‘Then go to your Bible, Martha Grylls; you will read there of all that the Lord intends we shall know. Have you a Bible?’

‘I have, sir.’

‘Then the greater will be your condemnation if you do not profit by it. Do you read it? Ah-h-h! —I’m afraid not—’fraid not.’

‘I do, sir, twice a day.’

‘God be praised!’ and the dear, zealous man rubbed his hands together as though there was yet hope for the murderess.

Maida's keen discernment perceived sincerity in the Religious Instructor's fervour, or she would not have deigned to reply as she had done, neither as she did, to prevent a misconception of her avowal.

'I do not read for my own gratification, but merely to fulfil a promise which I unfortunately made—I read the Bible for no other reason.'

'Poor—poor Martha!' said the Instructor, dejectedly. 'It is in that book that you would read Lucy's text. Ah! that blood is quite able to wash even your sin away, black and damning as it is. Do kneel down 'ere you read again, and beg for God's blessing on what you read, and then—'

Maida was becoming irritated; she could not brook what appeared to her sensitive mind an indelicate pressing of an advantage offered by position, and with some abruptness she exclaimed—

'Whether a favour from God or man, I have a particular dislike to blessings which can only be obtained by begging. I cannot seek a favour likely to be denied me—to find acceptance with me it must flow unbidden.'

Her impulsive spirit gathered anger as she spoke. By the time she had finished this speech she had drawn herself to her full height, and stood surveying the Instructor with flushed disdain.

Oh, Maida! thy God was more compassionate to thee than thou wert to thyself, or those thy words had been written in the eternal page to thy

lasting woe. Thou hadst decreed bitter things against thyself had the pen of fate been in thy power.

The antagonistic principle is strong in the human breast, so strong, that in our natural state we would rather walk to hell than be driven to heaven.

In addition to this principle, prisoners have the stimulus of revenge in refusing salvation. They have a notion that government wants them to be saved, therefore salvation is hateful to them ; and did not God force it upon some of them, as He did upon Saul, few of them would be saved. Not for himself, but as a salaried servant of government they dislike the Religious Instructor or Chaplain. They discern the Broad Arrow in all his pleadings, and accordingly detest them, and hope they are paying him out by marching on to perdition in the very teeth of his threats. There are of course exceptions to this rule—exceptions made by prisoners themselves in favour of heaven, and exceptions *in* some chaplains, whose correct judgment gives them irresistible power in spite of the government stigma so jealously regarded by the convicts. Such an exception was Mr. Evelyn, Maida's friend. Such was *not* the Religious Instructor of the 'Rose of Britain.' (For their dignity's sake the women called him Chaplain.) He was a truly pious, energetic man ; but needed judgment and discrimination of character in discharging his important

duties; for the lack of these two necessary items of a teacher's qualifications, he often brought about effects wholly contrary to his intentions. He failed as a pastor, whilst he did well as a preacher. From the desk, irrespective of idiosyncrasies, he erred not in shaking the quiver of truth over a body of persons under one condemnation; for the Spirit alone could guide the arrows—each to its appropriate mark. As a preacher he sought to turn a mass of sin, and on that mass brought to bear with great force the whole battery of Scripture denunciation, and none, save Pharaohic hardness, could withstand the ably-directed attack.

But when as a *pastor* he went from cell to cell, from solitary being to solitary being, and aimed the same power of attack on one poor sinner, the effect was to crush the timid, desponding soul, and to embolden the reckless, perverse soul with that daring which is akin to despair; that daring which rushes on because it cannot further exceed the bounds of mercy, and because it has already sinned the sin unto death, and reprieve is hopeless. Our Instructor took the Bible for his text (so did the Zealots), while he neglected to take it for his pattern. The voice of inspiration, whether from prophetic, apostolic, or divine lips, atones itself to suit the case before it. It encourages and invites the timid—‘Come unto *me* ;’ it reasons with the doubtful—‘Come now and let us reason together, saith the

Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, though they be red as crimson they shall be as wool ;' it persuades the wavering—' Why will ye die ?—Is there no balm in Gilead ?' it comforts the broken hearted—' I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions—I have found a ransom—Go in peace ;' while it warns the careless—' The wages of sin is death—Fly from the wrath to come—What a man soweth that shall he also reap ;' it threatens the stubborn—' This shall ye have at my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow—The wicked shall be turned into hell ;' and finally condemns the determined—' And these shall go away into everlasting punishment—Whose damnation is just.' In his zeal for his outcast sisters, the Instructor forgot so to deal with them ; he indiscriminately shook the thunders of Sinai around them. As with the ex-lunatic, so with Maida Gwynnham. As with the stubborn, hardened Peg Lodikins, so with the little tender-hearted Lucy Grenlow. He would tell of the precious blood shed for the remission of sins, but not until such ones as Maida and Lucy feared their guilt was too deep to be washed out by it.

Then, again, he laid great stress on show of feeling ; the maudlin tears of Peg Lodikins went for contrition, while the rigid features of Maida's stricken face were set down as obduracy. Mr. Evelyn had discerned at a glance that all the

pride, defiance, calmness, or impetuosity of Maida were only props to the bruised reed within. He felt at once that, not the irritating appliances of the executioner, but the tender though firm treatment of the surgeon, was needed there; and had he been her pastor, his ministrations would have tended to the gentle removal of those props by the removal of the cause which made them necessary. His anointing would have been to bind up the broken-hearted, only giving that pain which is inseparable from the healing process, how wisely soever dealt. We have already seen that whilst he lovingly intreated, he also faithfully reproved her. He despised not, in some cases, to follow St. Paul's example, 'Being crafty, I caught you with guile.'

Had our Religious Instructor so managed with Maida Gwynnham, who may know what happy results had ensued? During those tedious months of comparative idleness, her tortured soul was left to its own resources; and these were a firmer planting of the props—pride, defiance, &c.—around the bruised reed, to guard it from the rough grasp that wrung the wound where it should have touched it delicately—that gave unbearable agony where remedial pain alone was wanted: what wonder, then, that Maida left the prison ship an unaltered, if not a hardened, character?

Before the women she listened with a marked

deference to all the Instructor said, and she made little Lucy reverence his teachings. She knew that though the driving system was repugnant to her, there were those who would never see the gates of heaven were they not scared thither by the whip of small cords, and, accordingly, admired the man who had sufficient nerve to inflict the stripes, whilst she repudiated his indiscreet mode of administering the lash alike to all within his reach. When alone she shunned him in every possible way. She preferred the box, irons, cells, any punishment, to meeting him; but the more she shunned him, the more the dear, zealous man importuned her in every possible way; so that, brought to bay, she had often no resort but to assume an impregnable austerity, or to offer positive resistance, by which she incurred chastisement. In his mistaken zeal he once pronounced her an unfit companion for Lucy, and separated the friends for a season; and might have kept them entirely apart, had not the Surgeon-superintendent wisely interfered, foreseeing no end of irons, cells, and box for Maida, and no end of persecutions, crying, and isolation for poor Lucy, in persevering in a course so distasteful to both.

Peg Lodikins had a facetious aside for the Instructor's frequent interjectional comment—'It is my duty, ay, and my pleasure, "to be in season, and out of season," in my warnings to you.'

She would nudge the ex-lunatic with— ‘ “ In season, and out of season,” pertickler the latter!’ and then with sanctimonious up-glancing she would silently laud the beauty of a word fitly spoken.

Lucy, in her admiration of Maida, fancied that the ‘chaplain’ dodged her from deck to deck, from sheer inability to keep out of her presence, and quietly determined in her own mind that— ‘The Chaplain set a sight on that there Maida;’ a conclusion that she stored away in her mental locker for future use, as we shall see.

We must return to the berth-side where we left Maida fulfilling the duties of nurse. For many days Lucy’s life was despaired of. The doctor said her illness was not induced by the fall, but certainly hastened and aggravated thereby.

Maida dreaded the moment when returning consciousness should deprive poor Lucy of her new-found parent. ‘Mother! mother!’ had been the constant cry of delirium. A long and tranquil sleep had gradually overcome the restless invalid, and Maida now knelt by the berth, anxiously awaiting the result. She quite expected that Lucy’s dream of maternal proximity would end with the slumber, and was meditating how she should allay the disappointment and revulsion of feeling towards herself which must succeed, when she heard a suppressed sob—



It was from Lucy—

Whilst Maida knelt there absorbed in perplexity, little Grenlow opened her eyes without turning her head, and for many minutes surveyed the figure before her ere she could understand the mystery of the last week; and who shall blame that young creature, of scarce fifteen years, if tears from her very heart accompanied the recollection that she was a felon—being transported beyond the seas for the frightful crime of stealing five shillings!

She saw by the brown serge that the figure was that of a prisoner, but what prisoner she knew not. She longed to read her future treatment in the face; but the face was buried in the figure's hands.

Lucy longed and longed for perhaps thirty seconds; and then, unable to bear further uncertainty, she stretched out her finger and touched Maida's arm, but the face moved not. Shall we say that Maida Gwynnham, the murderess, continued to hide her eyes because she had not courage to meet a look of disappointment from a friendless child?

But the touch was repeated, and there was an imploring motion in it that Maida could not resist. She withdrew her hands, feeling almost guilty as she submitted her face to the earnest scrutiny of the two widely-opened eyes up-gazing from the

berth. The scrutiny seemed satisfactory. Though denuded of nature's best ornament, though surrounded by a badge of shame in the prison-cap, there was nothing in that countenance that the rarest beauty might not have envied—no point that the most fastidious critic could have desired to rectify.

Gazing on that countenance, Lucy again dropped off to sleep—again to awake; but this time with a smile—a smile that forced its way from her grateful heart through an avenue of inly sighs and regrets. She raised herself on one elbow, and extending her hand to Maida, whispered—

'Is it you that's been mother all along so kind?'

'I have tried to be, my child,' came the soft, meek answer. And that proud spirit that had fortified itself against all pity, reproach, or scorn, bent right down to meet a young girl's sorrow, and became child-like in its show of grief.

When the Chaplain looked in at No. 107, to see how she fared, he saw not only her asleep, but close beside her, face to face, another slumberer, whose features, relaxed from their rigid coldness beneath the genial rest, had lost their wonted sternness, and were full of feeling. When Lucy had sufficiently recovered, she told Maida her story—a story of simple pathos—

Would that it were unique in the annals of youthful crime!

## CHAPTER XII.

## LUCY GRENLOW'S TALE.

LUCY's mother had been a widow three years when she married again. Lover's promises did not merge into husband's fulfilments. When John Southwood wooed and won the pretty Mrs. Grenlow, he declared her children should find in him not only a father-in-law but a second father. He rejoiced to take her for better and for worse; the better being a comfortable little income in the form of a greengrocer's shop, the worse very decidedly consisting of three children, the present Lucy, aged thirteen years, and two younger sisters. But three months after his marriage he made another confidential declaration (not to his wife though), to the effect that, deny it who would, 'It was a beggarly hard thing that a man couldn't take a woman for better without being obliged to take her for worse, such worseness too as them there large-mouthed brats.'

Poor Lucy's chucks under the chin became less frequent, until one fine afternoon they came to a

full stop, and turned into a severe beating. Lucy ran screaming to her mother; the mother flew to the father, only to be sent back weeping to her child, full of impotent fears that home was no longer home to her three orphaned girls. From that afternoon John Southwood threw off the paternal mask, and ill-treated or neglected his wife's children as best suited his purpose. One day after a terrible flogging, Lucy ran away, and did not return until hunger forced her to seek her mother's roof the following morning. John did not beat her again, but he clenched his fist in her face, and swore that the next time she played the running off dodge, 'he would tan her fit for the market,' an expression that Lucy intuitively understood.

The poor mother perceived she must adopt some plan to come between the girl and her father's brutality. So she bade Lucy dress in her best and come along with her. She led her from shop to shop in search of some one who might need an errand-girl or little maid-of-all-work. To her delight she at last obtained her young daughter a place in the latter capacity in the house of a small haberdasher. Lucy was to remain until she was fourteen without wages. At the expiration of that period, if proved wage-worthy, she was to receive five shillings a month.

Mrs. Southwood entertained no doubts of the

promised remuneration, for she was sure of Lucy's good conduct, and did not mind, not she! telling as much to the haberdasher's wife in these words—

‘Lucy's a dapper little hussey when she has the life in her, but her life am easy put out of her. When she's tret well, she can do a'most anything.’ And the mother heaved a sigh in memory of days when her girl was able to do well under kind treatment in her own home.

The very next evening Lucy entered on her maid-of-all-work-ship in the haberdasher's service; and with unblemished character and increasing reputation she worked out her wageless months.

Bright with hope, and radiant with expectation, she got up an hour earlier than usual on the day from which her five shillings was to commence. With extra alacrity she dressed the children, prepared her kitchen, and served the family's breakfast; and when, in answer to her brisk curtsy and exuberant smile, her mistress wondered—

‘Why, Lucy, child, what ails you this morning?’

‘It's my day for beginning, please, mem;’ popped forth from her ready lips into missus's unready ears.

The five-shilling day in all its glory at last ‘aksherly’ arrived, as Lucy announced by the clapping of her well-worked hands on the morning her money fell due. And in the afternoon of tha,

eventful day, she sallied forth in full bloom by missus's permission to spend her earnings. But having purchased a ninepenny pair of gloves, eight pennyworth of pink gauze ribbon, two sixpenny aprons, and one pennyworth of lollypops, her heart smote her, and she hastened home to give the remaining half-crown as a peace-offering to her father. Shame would not let him accept the gift in his own huge hand—that same hand that had so cruelly beaten the poor child: but having no intention to refuse the coin, he sent Lucy to her mother, at the same time telling her that next month she ought to bring the whole five shillings to help towards the coming baby.

Lucy loved her mother to her heart, and was nothing loth to obey her father in transferring the half-crown, nevertheless she had a grain or two of English in her composition which made her, young as she was, feel rather indignant at being told she must not do as she pleased with her own. When, however, she saw her mother looking so pale and tired, and heard her wish to goodness that there weren't another of 'em coming into this miserable world, her English heart relented, and she vowed over and over again, that mother should have every farthing of next month's money, and she thought all the praise and blessings she got in return for her vows a cheap five shillings' worth.

It was with a heart swelling with filial pride,

that Lucy left her home that night, and it was with an aching, aching heart, that Mrs. Southwood watched her retreating step until she lost the last glimpse of Lucy's frock far down the street; and it was with a still more aching, aching heart that she turned from her little window again to wish to goodness that another of 'em wasn't coming for to make it still harder to know how to do, and how to please father.

Next month arrived. True to her vow Lucy carried the five-shilling piece to her mother; but father was not ashamed to receive it this time, seeing he had an additional call on his means in the very tiny person of a son and heir—a son to a brute of a father, and a poor sickly, woe-begone mother; and an heir to what? To an inheritance of pain and care and trouble which the world is not forgetful to lay up for its progeny.

Next month arrived, and though Lucy was sorely tempted in the form of a smart pink ribbon—a particular weakness of hers and of her mother's before her—she kept faith with her vow and again deposited the crown in her father's hand. Next month had only in part arrived, when a son was born to the haberdasher, and a nurse was engaged to overlook the infantile interests.

Nurse took a fancy to Lucy, and in an evil moment Lucy repaid the fancy with her confidence; and divulging the family secret of the five shillings.

sought advice on the propriety of spending one-half of the coming wage on herself. Nurse was decidedly in favour of such a step, and spoke not a little against John Southwood's rapacity, setting such rapacity down to the score of his step-father-ship.

For a day and a half, Lucy remained in a doubtful state of mind. She longed to follow the pink ribbon bend of her inclination, and yet longed to give the whole sum to her father, in order to save poor mother a row.

She looked in her kitchen glass and thought how a smart ribbon would become her plump, shiny face, and thence into her mental glass, through which the pale, tear-marked countenance of her mother shook itself sadly at her, and then hesitated which of the two faces should have the benefit of her doubt. At this luckless juncture entered Mrs. Gullem, the monthly; gruel-cup in hand she came. She perceived at once what turn the girl's thoughts were taking as she stood before the glass. Advancing to her, she exclaimed—

‘I call it a monstrous mean shame that that pretty face should lose a lover all for a bit of ribbin. If I'm a woman, I know your mother'd rather see a yard or two of trimming in your cap and round your neck than she'd feel a few paltry coppers in her pocket a-jingling.’

‘But father wouldn't,’ was Lucy's quick rejoinder



‘The more shame he! Nothing in the world but an old step-father; and what d’ye get for your dootifulness? a few extra stripes on your back.’

‘Oh! no, Mrs. Gullem, he’ve never beat me since I was here.’

‘But he don’t thank you, you foolish hussy.’

‘I don’t want no thanks from he,’ said Lucy, looking crestfallen. ‘It’s all for mother. Praps he’d beat her stead of me if he didn’t get the money, and that would be worse than beating of me.’

‘Come, come; you needn’t peck up like that; what odds do you think ’tis o’ mine? why no more than *this*’ (showing her little finger); ‘all I want is to see a poor girl like you righted. A proper womanish feeling *I* calls it.’

‘I didn’t go for to offend you, Mrs. Gullem. I was only seeing how it felt like.’

‘I know, I know; and admires you accordingly,’ cried Mrs. Gullem, benignantly, as she walked out of the kitchen, leaving the leaven to work in the child’s mind. Just from outside the kitchen door a sigh came back to Lucy—

‘That pretty face to lose a sweetheart, what a pity! I’d manage it easy, just for the liking I’ve taken to her if she’d let me, and no one’d be the wiser for it.’

Not fifteen, and yet have a lover! what wondrous promotion for so young a girl! How delightfully

old it made her appear! What maiden of fourteen could be proof against an insinuation so elevating? Not Lucy Grenlow.

The heaven worked more furiously.

Mrs. Gullem sat composedly in the nursery, chirruping to one of Leigh Hunt's little pulpy masses, when Lucy beckoned to her through the partially-closed shutter of the window.

'There, there, the pitty dear *shall* go to her mamma whilst nurse looks after the gruel,' intoned Mrs. Gullem, as she put the baby into its mother's arms, and obeyed the silent summons without appearing to notice Lucy's signal, and failing to remember that the gruel did not require her superintendence, having been already imported and partly demolished.

'I heard what you said, Mrs. Gullem. How do you mean you'd manage it?' asked Lucy.

'Heard what? manage what, my dear?'

Mrs. Gullem spoke with the air of one who is charged with an unknown misdemeanour.

Lucy explained, and the nurse replied in a slow, recollective manner—

'Did I say that? well, I must have said it right out of my heart, then, for I don't remember it now.'

Of course you did, Mrs. Gullem; it could not have come from any place less corrupt.

She continued for some minutes in an attitude betokening thought.

‘Well, then, whether I said it or not, I’m quite willing to help you. Let’s see; you wants to keep part of your money? Just nod *yes* or *no* as I goes on.’

Lucy nodded.

‘Why not all? Bless us, five shillings an’t over much to trig you out as your pretty face deserves. Why not spend all, says I?’

‘Cause of mother.’

‘Well then, spend half. Next is, you wants to manage not to let father know it, that’s it, ain’t it?’

Lucy nodded.

‘And very right too, a nasty brute! But here’s the mud, and how to help you clean over I can’t think all in a hurry.’

There is no hurry in the case, Mrs. Gullem; the plan is already formed in your crafty mind.

‘How d’ye like this; spend it and give it to father too? I’d put you in the way of it.’

Lucy’s face brightened.

‘Borrow it; now to once; and then when you gets your five shillings, carry ’em to your father all but sixpence. So you do each time till you have saved ten sixpences. Or may be, if you likes it better, when I get my pay I’ll lend you a half towards it.’

Lucy shook her head, and thought the monthly did not know her master, or she would not propose

a loan from him ; but the nurse had no idea of borrowing according to Lucy's conception. The advance *was* to come from the haberdasher, but *without* his consent ; in fact, it was to come from the *till*. Mrs. Gullem had interests of her own at stake, which made this necessary. What those interests were, let those tell who have gone to the brink of detection, and then to insure success to the last, have remorselessly pushed over one who has sufficient marks of guilt upon her to appease the cry of justice.

Carefully feeling her way, Mrs. Gullem told Lucy that she could easily borrow the money from the till, and pay it back again by sixpenny instalments. The haberdasher was not a good accountant, having always depended on his wife's assistance in this branch ; so she—Mrs. Gullem—said that the five shillings would not be missed ; or if they were, would only be set against the *miss-takes* master always made in his reckonings ; or, ten chances to one that any accounts would be kept during the husband's double work ; he would have enough to do without fussing over trifles. Thus argued the old deceiver.

‘ Oh ! Mrs. Gullem, that would be real stealing ! What would mother say ? She'd nigh to break her heart. I'd rather never have a ribbon, and I wish I weren't pretty.’

‘ Much obliged to your imperance ! Talk of

stealing to *me*—as honest a woman as ever nursed a baby—indeed; I think you must be mighty particular to show airs about a job that I'd do as soon as look. If I'm not scrup'lous and pious, I'd like to know who is. Catch me giving advice again to a thankless hussey.'

'But don't you think 'twould be stealing? How do I feel so queer about it like?'

'Because you pretends to be wiser than your betters. As to stealing, look here; don't you mean to be all fair and honest, and put it straight away back by sixpences at a time?'

Mrs. Gullem's voice gradually dropped to persuasiveness as she saw signs of relenting in Lucy's face.

'Yes,' nodded Lucy.

'Well, then, who's hurt by your loan? How can master be the loser by losing what he didn't know he'd got? for that's how I take it 'twill be. You'll get a smart ribbin round your pretty face, and he won't lose by your getting it. But whether he's the wiser or not, pay it back says I. My rule is, always pay your legal debts.'

But not your *il*-legal, was Mrs. Gullem's mental reservation; and many such debts had she incurred without either prior or after intention of liquidating them.

Lucy's head again shook, but not, as before, with a shocked motion; doubt seemed pre-eminent.

'Suppose it should be found out 'fore I'd paid, they wouldn't excuse me I'm feared.'

'Your intention's all right, you is in distress, and helps yourself to a few shillings that isn't wanted; that must satisfy your honesty, which is very great;—as to the findings out, why, of course, that would be uncomfortable-like; but I don't think it *will* be if I guess right about master. If it is, why there's no help for it—you must tell a bit of a fib, and say you don't know nothing about it; this won't really harm, if you keeps honest and pays back the sixpences.'

Mrs. Gullem saw victory on her side, and without another word retreated to her nursery, and let off her secret chuckle in another hug of the baby, and another intoned endearment to it.

She had acted her part. She must now stand by to watch results, and guard herself. It was no part of her policy that Lucy should escape detection, therefore she refused to aid the child in securing the money. If the theft was clumsily made, so much the more advantageous to her (Mrs. Gullem's) aforesaid interest.

Following the advice of the adage, 'Give the devil his due,' we are compelled to say—that believing the generally accepted report of the haberdasher's character, she quite thought a private lecture, and parental flogging, would be the extent of punishment inflicted on the culprit. She, well skilled as she was in the deceitful twist-

ings of the heart, had yet to learn that even Christians take a decided satisfaction in repairing their money injuries by the hand of judicial vengeance; even *they* forget to forgive as they would be forgiven. Not that we plead the possibility of carrying this divine and blessed injunction to its utmost in the public relations of life.

But surely if ever there was a case when a free forgiveness would have been as *possible* as *beneficial* in its issue, it was the present one, when sobbing as though each sob would be her last, Lucy Grenlow stood before her master, under suspicion of having robbed the till of five shillings.

Sob—sob—sob—was the only answer the haberdasher obtained to his questions, until he added—

‘Lucy, you had better confess it; *then*, nothing more will be said about it.’

Lucy knew not that a policeman was in waiting, so wiping her eyes sufficiently hard to wipe them right out, she whispered a confession of her guilt; and then feeling immediate relief from the discharge of the dreadful secret from her breast, she stopped her crying, only enunciating her sorrow and contrition by convulsive noises which appeared like sighs jetted upwards and then pulled downwards.

No sooner was the declaration made than the policeman stepped forward and took Lucy prisoner. Mrs. Gullem who had been called in as a disinterested party to witness the search and note pro-

ceedings, also stepped forward, and begged the haberdasher to look over the offence just this once, pleading that it was very bad of Lucy, but then if she were forgiven now, she might be sufficiently warned for the future; that she was, after all, a mere child, and a good whipping would be best for her. But the haberdasher was inexorable; he said he was a public man and owed his country a duty, and if every one followed his example there would be fewer criminals. 'Nip crime in its bud, Mrs. Gullem,' (pointing to the bud Lucy), 'and we should not have so many full-blown, glaring flowers to uproot,' cried the patriotic tradesman.

A bold flaunting sunflower shining in the window-sill evidently supplied this illustration impromptu to his mind.

'I admire your kind, womanly mediation, but it would be weak in me to yield to it. Do your duty, policeman; sad, sad, though it be.'

And the officer bore off his prize.

Matters went hardly with Lucy. The five shillings was not the amount of the plaintiff's loss; sum after sum had disappeared from the till during some time past, until the old-fashioned expedient of marking some coin was resorted to. The very next evening more money was missing, a search was instituted, and it was found on Lucy, and recognised as *not* her property by a figure on the reverse side. The haberdasher at once charged



Lucy with the former robberies, but she denied all knowledge of them, and, as we have seen, would not plead guilty to the sum found in her pocket, until reassured by her master's promise.

Her story of meaning to repay the money was only received by a laugh from the court, and was discarded with a severe jest by the judge. It never occurred to Lucy to mention Mrs. Gullem as a party in the theft; neither did it occur to her childish mind that Mrs. Gullem had been a party in it. That worthy personage had studiously avoided Lucy since the time she had advised her to take 'the loan.' Having dropped her seed she wished to remain in ignorance of its progress. The first intimation that Lucy had committed the act, she received from the haberdasher; therefore, she could fairly display all due surprise when informed of the painful incident. This ignorance on her part had the desired effect on Lucy. If the girl had entertained any notion of joining Mrs. Gullem in the deed, her primitive train of reasoning, namely, that Mrs. Gullem, *not* knowing she had taken the money, *couldn't* have had anything to do with the wicked theft, would have non-plussed such a notion. As it was, her thoughts were by far too engrossed in the horrors of her guilt, position, and possible punishment, to spare one thought on Mrs. Gullem.

Nevertheless Mrs. Gullem had many to bestow

on Lucy, and could not be easy until she had visited her in the prison, to ascertain what *had* been, and what had *not* been said. To her relief, the girl received her almost affectionately, and when she exclaimed, somewhat reproachfully—

‘Why, Lucy, you never told me what you had done,’

The little prisoner burst out—

‘Oh, no, no! I wish I had, and this wouldn’t have happened. Oh! how ever came I to be so wicked, oh, *so* wicked, *so* wicked!’

‘Ah! ’twas a pity; I could have advised you, poor child. I fear ’twill go bad with you, seeing there’s been a lot missed—you may trust me, Lucy—are you sure now, you an’t taken no more that’s been lost?’

‘Oh, no, no, Mrs. Gullem! I only took them ’orrid five shillings, and I meant to put ’em back, indeed I did.’

‘Well, well, ’twas a pity, and I pities you, heartily.’ She offered Lucy a pocket handkerchief full of child-comforts in the shape of gingerbread, apples, and sweets; but Lucy shook her head at the bundle, with an expression hopeless enough to have wrung any heart that had aught but selfish feeling left in it.

Mrs. Gullem was taking back the bundle when Lucy raised her eyes without raising her head, and said—

‘ Maybe the children would like ’em; ’twould help to keep ’em from fretting mother.’

On leaving, the ‘ monthly ’ kissed Lucy, and told her that she would never ‘ think no worser of her for them paltry shillings.’ When she had gone, Lucy felt the door had closed on her best friend, and on one of the kindest and most upright of women.

The girl Grenlow, in whom the law recognised a practised thief, was sentenced to transportation beyond the seas for seven years.

‘ Pity you had’nt stolen *seven* shillers, and that would have made a shiller a year!’ was a remark made by the ex-lunatic, on hearing Lucy’s story.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### MULGRAVE BATTERY AND 'THE LODGE.'

'A gallant vessel towards our port  
Makes on in stately pride,  
Her sun-lit sails the breeze has caught,  
And she doth landward ride.'

'THERE'S a ship in sight, papa. Come, look at the flagstaff. Perhaps 'tis Uncle Herbert and cousins. Do let's go and see,' cried Charlie Evelyn, the only son of Mr. Evelyn, senior, of Macquarie Street, Hobarton, brother of the Rev. Herbert Evelyn, whose acquaintance we have already made. Two days before the above exclamation from Charlie, Mr. Evelyn had received a letter from England announcing the immediate return of his brother and niece to the land of their adoption. Since then Charlie had kept a keen look-out towards Mulgrave Battery, whence up-reared that herald of joy or woe, of hope or despair, —the flagstaff.

Mr. Evelyn sprang to the window.

'So there is, my boy. Let us try to decipher

the signal. There, now, the kind wind has blown it straight out for us.'

'From the south! from the south!' shouted Charlie, frisking from the window to the other side of the room, and thence back with a bound to the window, as the flag displayed the red cross on a white ground.

'That's one go, at any rate,' said Mr. Evelyn, patting the curly head of his little boy, who gloried in being a genuine 'gum tree,' and not a stupid British oak.

Mr. Evelyn quietly reseated himself to a reperusal of the 'Courier,' while Charlie remained faithful to his post.

In a short time a second shout brought Mr. Evelyn again to the window, and, with no less an interest than Charlie's, he watched the flag being hauled down from the top-mast, and the ball running up to the yard-arm.

'A brig; no, a ship!' cried Charlie, as the ball reached its destination at No. 1, on the right.

'Two goes in the right direction,' said Mr. Evelyn, patting his approval of Charlie's good memory.

A little more suspense, and down went the ball.

Charlie was too excited to announce the event, and Mr. Evelyn was too busy to observe it. The flag was hoisted in the place of the ball.

'A beastly, stupid old pisson ship!' exclaimed

the child, in a tone of extreme disgust, as the prison flag proclaimed a fresh cargo of female convicts, *ex* the 'Rose of Britain.'

'Charlie, Charlie, what will Uncle Herbert say when he hears you use such words? How would you like to have the vessel he comes by called such names, eh, naughty boy?'

'Oh, papa,' answered the curly-headed, petticoated urchin, 'his ship won't bring a lot more of those pests.'

Seeing a frown on his father's brow he apologised.

'Why, papa, Mr. Squire calls them pests. I don't mind 'em, though, except when they come instead of dear uncle.'

Mr. Evelyn looked uneasily at him, and then, humming a tune, walked backwards and forwards on the hearth-rug. He, as well as every other Tasmanian parent, had cause to feel uneasiness. His child breathed an unhealthy moral atmosphere; how could he fail to become infected? It was a constant strife between poison and antidote. Parental teachings were undermined by subtle nursery influences. Lessons of morality and piety, listened to with reverence on the mother's lap or father's knee, were contradicted by the practices of convict life, so that Charlie was puzzled to know which was the correct path—that commended to him by precept, or that chosen by the multitude. In fact,

he had to decide between seeing and hearing. It was true, he was taught to look on the prisoners as transgressors, suffering the penalty of their sin; but when, instead of one or two individuals, he saw himself surrounded by them at home and abroad, he was very naturally led to consider them a class born into the world to as inevitably fill its allotted position as any other great division of the human race. Free—bond—conveyed to his imagination only an idea of caste. Again, when he saw all useful occupations engrossed by this class, he was convinced that they were a very necessary and important people, without whose aid the world could not exist. Two interjectional remarks made by him on separate occasions will show his mental appreciation of this class. When taken by his father to see some public work, which was just receiving its finishing touches from convict labour, he admired in silence for a long while, and then broke out—

‘When *I’m* a pisner, won’t I build a beauty!’

And on being asked by a gentleman about to return to England if he would like to go too, he made several objections. He could not leave papa and mamma: there were no pretty parrots in England. But these objections were left in the background by the insurmountable climax—

‘Why there are no lots of pisners in that country to do our work. How *could* I go?’

These remarks were rewarded by a hearty laugh by all hearers save Mr. Evelyn. His brow contracted a frown peculiar to himself, as he heard in his child's voice the certain symptoms of moral disease.

'Oh, but he will grow out of such notions,' said one to the grieved father on that occasion.

'I have not the least doubt of it, sir,' bitterly replied Mr. Evelyn, choosing to take the words literally; 'even as the flower grows out of the seed. Notions produce the man, not man the notions, I take it.'

'You take it too seriously, then, sir. Convictism is a great nuisance *per se*; but, — me, if I don't incline to that young rogue's way of thinking, and ask, What could we do without our convicts? Should we ever have been what we are without them? Blessings in disguise, eh, Mr. Evelyn? Blessing in government livery—ha! ha! ha!'

'King John gave us our noble charter; but I query whether a perpetuity of king Johns would be acceptable, Mr. Bruce.'

'Oh, don't mistake me. I'm not taking the rascals' part. I'd much rather do without them; but, — me, if I see how. And, after all, more is made of the evil than there is call for. I confess it's devilish disgusting when a man leaves his office with a ramping appetite, and runs home expecting a ready dinner, to find his wife swelter-



ing over the fire, making a hash, where a roast goose was promised, and the cook lying drunk alongside her, or else gone off either with a constable to the watch-house or to the bush ; but, to my mind, with such annoyances the evil ends. I hold the doctrine of original sin, and believe that wickedness don't wait for convicts to put it into our children's minds. The effects of the system are not so injuriously extended.'

'They do not extend to our pies and puddings certainly, except in parallel cases to yours, sir ; but there are dearer interests than those of the palate to be considered,' quietly answered Mr. Evelyn, unconsciously surveying the inflated paunch of his companion.

'Well, do you prefer immigrants? My wife says, "Give me fifty government servants before you bring home one immigrant;" that is, government despatches, of course ; private comers are well enough. A viler or more useless set than the contents of an emigrant vessel can't be, in my opinion. There is no managing them : they turn up their noses at the convicts, very often their superiors, and give warning in no time if they are spoken to, or can't perform a certain amount of mischief unreprieved.'

The speaker waited for an answer ; but none forth came, and he proceeded—

'It is *my* opinion that government inflicts a no

less evil in pouring on us ship-loads of paupers than in filling our land with convicts. My wife's a witty woman, Mr. Evelyn, and she calls the one Prevention and the other Cure. Then say I, this black dose of Prevention is worse than the yellow Cure; for in the former we have all the rascals without that badge of rascality on them, by which we are licensed to hold them in terror, eh, sir?

'There is truth in what you say, Mr. Bruce; and when we remember that emigration is a nation's expedient to provide for those who might otherwise provide for themselves in a less respectable way, I do not see how there should not be truth in it; but I am disposed to think that much of our disappointment in emigrants, as a body, arises from an evil existing in ourselves. We have hitherto been much as slaveholders. We have had our fellow-creatures under our thumb; without our leave they could neither turn, look, nor speak: to turn was to be refractory; to look was to defy; to speak was to be insolent; and each of these sins met its punishment. We have been served by slaves until we prefer their abject servitude, and our despotic masterdom to the servitude of men who have rights in common with us, and a strong will to assert those rights. Having been long accustomed to the unresisting obedience of the convict, we cannot brook the whys and wherefores of the free. I wish you a very good morning, Mr.

Bruce,' and, raising his hat to the well-paunched gentleman, Mr. Evelyn passed up Goulbourn Street before his statement could be opposed.

Mr. Evelyn had fewer annoyances to complain of than many colonists. Since his marriage he had been blessed with five good servants, four men and one woman. Whether these men were 'good' from his treatment of them, or from laudable reformatory desires in themselves, is for future determination. One fact, however, is very sure, that neither of the four were 'good' from rate of crime, for all were desperate offenders. The woman had entered his service at sixteen years of age, having been transported for boot-stealing. She remained with him until she obtained her ticket; then, obedient to the prisoner's universal yearning for his or her first act of comparative freedom, she gave her master warning: the temptation was too inviting to resist. She changed owners, and in a fortnight, deprived of her ticket, she became the miserable habitant of a Cascade's cell!

Little Charlie, a lovely specimen of infant Tasmania—a bright, glowing, bouncing boy of six years—had imbibed as small an amount of evil as possible from the moral contamination; but the amount was small only in comparison.

Interspersed with the five good servants had many scores of hopeless characters discomfited Mr. Evelyn's hearth and nursery. It was nothing

rare to Charlie to have three new nurses on three successive days; it was no new thing for him to fall asleep under one woman's eye, and awake under another's guardianship. He was accustomed to these changes and chances, and thought slightly of them. He was accustomed to the prison petticoats and calico caps—they were nothing to him. There was no shudder when the constable marched off his nurse; he would skip to the window to see the 'fun,' as from earliest days he had learnt to designate the bearing away of some unfortunate convict. There was no shudder when a new Anson expiree entered his nursery, clad in the brown badge of crime; he would run to her, and clasping his chubby arms round her legs, ask—

'What are you for?'

And then, if the crime did not equal his expectations, he would seem vexed, and say—

'That isn't very bad! why didn't you steal a lot?'

The expiree would laugh, and, winking to her sister convict, pronounce the 'chap a regular shiner.'

Had not immediate influence been at work from prisoners who took a malignant pleasure in spoiling the handiwork of parental anxiety, there was in the daily contact with crime an indirect influence as baneful to the youthful mind. Moral

sensibilities were imperceptibly weakened by the unavoidable and familiar intercourse.

As we have seen, in Emmeline's case, there was a possibility of so shielding a child, that it should grow up like a lily among thorns; but such growing up was only to be insured by an utter self-abnegation on the part of the parents, and a seclusion so strict on the part of the child, that but few could endure it for the long years necessary to ultimate success. The majority of Tasmanian parents, being young, feel it hard to make their marriage-life one of nun-like durance. Apt to look on the bright side, they trust their children to convict superintendence; they listen to the solicitations of the sunny sky or pleasure-loving friends, and go forth to those enjoyments which are considered the privilege of youth, and which are so alluringly displayed in such a climate as Van Diemen's Land. A mother of five-and-twenty, with six babies around her, is no uncommon sight. Such a young mother will look piteously at you, and ask—

‘Is it to be expected, now, that I am to be shut up with these children all day long? I might as well be a prisoner at once.’

When you look at her witching eyes and form, and contrast them with the careworn appearance of an anti-convict mother, you are disposed to decide in her favour.

But when you look at the nursery during her absence, and behold the six morsels of beings either terrified into unnatural quiet or learning lessons of immorality, you are in favour of the gentle parent, who, forgetting all but her offspring, wears out her prime of days in sheltering them from erroneous preceptors.

One sentiment with which the convict evil infects immature principle, is one somewhat similar to that which intervenes between slaveholder and slave—a feeling that appropriates to the *Free* the first attribute of the verb, and throws the other two—Doing and Suffering—for the special use of the *Bond*. Children imbibe this feeling from their infancy; it grows with their growth, and strengthens with strength at rapid paces. Without having the actual abhorrence of crime, or without sharing the grievances which cause their elders to use the word 'convict' as a synonyme for every opprobrious epithet, they apply to prisoners similar terms to those we heard from Charlie, merely as the parrot repeats 'pretty Poll' after its human teacher. The sweetest Christian in the island as unperturbedly announces that her woman has got 'three months,' as an English mistress informs her visitor that her servant has a holiday. A child hears, and draws his own conclusion from the matter-of-fact statement.

Weary of watching the flagstaff, Charlie had

fallen asleep on the sofa, whilst his papa partook of an early dinner. Neither of the two, therefore, observed that the pantomime was again exhibiting on Mulgrave Battery; consequently, they were both taken by surprise, a few hours after, by a well-remembered voice—‘Stop coachman, this is it—“The Lodge!”’ And in a moment more a cab drove up the gravelled path, and it was the work of scarcely another minute to bring Mr. Evelyn clean out of the window at a leap—and Mr. Herbert Evelyn from the cab, into each other’s hand-grasp; and a grasp it was! such a grasp as only those may know who have experienced what it is to have eighteen thousand miles of ocean rolling between them and their brothers.

By a natural attraction, Charlie bounded into Bridget’s arms, exclaiming—

‘This is the Cousin Bridget, *I* know.’

And as Bridget kissed, and over-kissed the curly-headed beauty, she felt she held a regular armful of roguery.

‘This is cousin what I don’t know, papa,’ cried Charlie, glad that the prolonged operation of hand-squeezing gave him the opportunity of introducing Miss D’Urban to her uncle.

After a hearty kiss or two on her blooming cheek, Mr. Evelyn held Bridget gently backwards, in order to take a fuller view of the half-

shy, half-smiling face that reciprocated his embrace.

'Why, Herbert, we haven't a rose that could beat this,' was the result of the inspection.

Mr. Herbert smiled sadly, and pointing to the cab where drooped his daughter, he said—

'Ah, henceforward, I fear, we must exchange titles, and have the Lily of Tasmania and the Rose of England, instead of *vice versâ*. My rose has faded! But, George, you go in; I have promised poor Emmeline that she shall be carried to her room to receive your welcome; here it would overpower her too much for after removal.'

As Mr. Herbert Evelyn assisted his daughter up the verandah stairs, the coachman came forward, and reading permission in Bridget's good-tempered face, asked—

'Sure, never, that isn't the same Miss Evelyn what went home, come back in that unlikely fashion? the pride of her father as she was!' and a tear twinkled in his eye. 'Me and my mates has blessed her a thousand times, as she passed down along by his side; sometimes us thought whether he didn't get some of his lovesome ways out of her, only that he's natural good in hisself.'

'Who are your mates? have you been a sailor?' said Bridget.

'Lord love you, miss! you'm a new hand, I guess; my mates is them what I came over with,



and them what was ganged with me. I'm government,' he added, seeing that Bridget still looked mystified.

'Ah, ah!' cried Charlie, clapping his hands, 'she don't know he is a pis'ner—they are all pis'ners;' and the little fellow seemed to enjoy his cousin's innocence, and so did the man, who chimed in by way of comforting the fresh arrival—

'Ah! she'll know all about it by-and-by; won't she, Master Charlie?'

'Won't she, that's all!' shouted Charlie, capering with delight, and making a curious attempt to return the driver's sly wink.

'Just come from England, miss?' touching his cap.

'Yes.' Bridget hardly knew how to look.

'Somephin' in honour of Old England,' appealed the man, again touching his cap with one hand, while the other performed a service of gesticulations significant of giving and taking.

Bridget dropped a half-crown into his hand, which he received open-mouthed and open-eyed.

'By jingo, she'm a cracker!' he ejaculated, as he drove off.

'Oh, Charlie, how *could* you talk so before the poor creature; you won't be my Charlie if you are so cruel!' cried Miss D'Urban, as soon as the coachman was out of hearing.

'Oh! it's nothing being gover'm'et out here,

cousin ; everybody nearly is—I mean all the poor peoples ; *she's* a pis'ner, only she's just got her clothes ;' he pointed by way of illustration to a maid-servant, who just then ran down the steps to relieve Bridget of her carpet-bag.

'Yes, ma'am, I'm government,' bobbed the woman, without the slightest tone of self-depreciation. 'I bought my clothes only last week, on purpose for the master's company.'

'And *I'm* a gum tree !' called Charlie, drawing himself to his utmost height, in imitation of that straight, tall tree, as he stood at the top of the verandah, waiting for the others.

'Well, Bridgy, welcome to "The Lodge!"' exclaimed Mr. Evelyn, coming forward to meet his niece. 'Though I've never seen these blooming cheeks before, I think I am better acquainted with you than with any of my nieces. Miss Em has sent on before and taken a place for you in my heart. A thousand welcomes to "The Lodge," and all its honours, which have been accumulating for you since your aunt played truant, and ran up the country to pay her annual visit, and introduce Miss Baby to her maternal grandparents. The keys are waiting for you, and doubtless also a few "kitchen rows," which I hear you have a special gift in conciliating.'

'Oh, uncle ! that's wicked Lionel ! I'm sure dear Em would not have written you such nonsense.'

‘Albeit, I am apprised of the wholesome fact, and congratulate myself that the remedy grows so near the disease. Now let me introduce you to Hobarton. Here, stand where you are, and look at the landscape. Could England give you anything more lovely? There is our pride, the Derwent, and there is our noble monument to our mother-country’s hero, Mount Wellington; it generally has clouds on its summit, but this evening it has doffed them to salute you, I suppose. There, straight across the harbour, how exquisite is the light resting on those hills, retreating tier after tier, until the most distant seems to melt into the sky!’

Mr. Evelyn thought Bridget was listening attentively to him. On turning to her, he perceived her eyes were full of tears. Feelings she had hoped to smother, on being noticed, increased beyond control. Laying her head on her uncle’s shoulder, she wept aloud.

Little Charlie slipped to her side, and softly pulling her gown, whispered—

‘Are you crying at me, cousin? I’m so sorry.’

Without removing her head, Bridget drew the little penitent close to her, while Mr. Evelyn replied—

‘No, no, Charlie. Cousin Bridget is feeling very thankful to the dear, good God who has brought her over the long, long sea to a country quite as beautiful as her own England. We must

let her cry a little bit ; persons are not always sorry when they weep, Charlie, boy.'

Bridget looked up, and repaid Uncle Ev with one of her genuine smiles, shining through her tears.

Mr. Evelyn also knew that many other emotions were working in her breast ; all the strange sensations that crowd upon a new comer's mind ; all the recollections of the past and left behind, rushing with jealous vigour to assert their rights over the present and time forward, he well knew were contesting the ground of the English maiden's heart, as, for the first moment, she gazed on her future home, and found it fair to look upon, beyond her rosiest imaginings. Who that has stood on foreign shores has not felt these strange battlings of spirit ? has not felt a regretful pang through the heart, as in beholding the scene before him, he has been obliged either to shake the palm of superiority from his own land, or to share it with another ?

'It is very, very lovely,' at last said Bridget, 'but it hardly looks foreign, or unlike England.'

'Nevertheless, it comes from forrin', as the sailor says. But what do you mean by like England ? I suppose you, with all the rest of the folk at home, have always considered us a set of semi-barbarians. It is very odd that people having brothers, sisters, and relations of various orders in the Australian colonies, take so little trouble to ascertain the real amount of civilisation in these islands.

‘The notions formed of our mode of life are vague as those formed of Timbuctoo. I answer for it, now, you expected a canoe rowed by savages would conduct you from the vessel to Hobarton, and then that you would be knocked down once or twice by bushrangers, or be carried off by boomers before you could reach my house, eh, Bridget?’

‘Not quite so bad, uncle; but I must confess I had no expectation of finding everything appear so English. I did not fancy you would all look like semi-barbarians, as you say, but must plead to a few misconceptions. I thought you would be dreadfully oldfashioned, and that—’

‘And that you would blaze amongst us a very comet of fashion,’ interrupted Uncle Ev, with a wicked smile.

Bridget blushed, too ingenuous to hide the girlish weakness. She said—

‘I thought I should look better than other people, and be immediately recognised as a new comer by my dress. Having read advertisements in the “Times” for cast-off clothes for Australia, I naturally—’

‘Thought you might discover a few old friends out here,’ again interrupted Mr. Evelyn. ‘But I can tell you, Miss D’Urban, the young ladies out here make a fine to-do about those said advertisements. There has been serious talk among them on the propriety of petitioning the Home Govern-

ment to introduce an Act, entitled "An Act for the Suppression of Offensive Advertisements." As to dress, no doubt you bring the newest fashion, seeing you are four months in advance of your sisters Vandemonian. I query, though, whether you will not look the quietest bird in Hobarton until your home stock is worn out. Hyde Park cannot outdress our ladies! They learn to copy nature, unwittingly perhaps, but not the less on that account. A style of colouring, that would be inharmonious in England, blends with the ardent hues of the southern world. In England the sober, little sparrow, or modest robin, teaches the befitting garment; here the parrot and firetail flutter by on a sunbeam, and lead the fashion. Everything here is bright and glowing, except the foliage.'

'The hills are not, papa,' interrupted Charlie.

'You have arrived at a happy season, Bridget. A month later, and the dust and heat would have done their work on all that now claims the title of verdant. The everbrowns bear jealous rule here; it has been jocosely said, to help out the government notion, that we are fated, even by nature, to have the badge of crime in our midst! But I doubt whether there is not a remedial aptness in the dusky foliage. Were the hills and trees to be arrayed in vivid tints, there would be no relief to the eye. Radiance above, around, and below, would be oppressive. Yonder, how exquisite is the

wattle! Were that shower of gold to fall upon a bright green, the effect would be to dazzle, instead of to please, as now. Yonder again, the silver wattle, how fairy-like is the delicate tinting; it gives more the idea of the pencil than the brush. But to see the wattle to perfection, you must see it in moonlight, when the beams shimmer through the branches, as though the feathery leaves formed a plaything, and not a barrier.'

'Oh, I shall like it very much, and should be very happy now, if it were not for poor Em,' sighed Bridget.

'Ah, poor Emmeline!' responded Uncle Ev, leading her into the house. 'How does Herbert bear it?'

'Like a Christian, Uncle Ev.'

'Very vague; there are two sorts of Christians.'

'Like Emmeline would if she were Uncle Herbert,' replied Bridget, with much assurance of voice.

'Ah, that is satisfactory. Now, then, you enter the Lodge—very barbaric, isn't it?' he quizzically asked, as the rich velvet-pile carpet and yellow damask curtains met Bridget's astonished sight.

'Oh, it looks like a dear old friend,' cried Bridget, running over to a small statuette of the Greek Slave that stood, the simple and only ornament of a side-table.

'Why, uncle, you've everything, just as we have at home.'

'Ay, and rather more than you have at home.'

This was said with an emphasis that made Miss D'Urban expect an explanation ; but uncle vouchsafed only a nod and a hem in reply, and he walked out of the room, leaving her to a quiet survey of the luxuries of a Van Diemen drawing-room.

'Please, miss, the master said as you'd like to be showed up stairs. Everything's to sixes and sevens, as the mistress is gone up country ; but then, after to board anyhow that's on real ground's a blessing.'

The free-and-easy manner of the servant did not at all convey the idea of prison taint. Bridget took for granted that this domestic certainly was not a convict. Her dress was smart, and her appearance not subdued, as had been that of all the others. She did not know that a report had already represented her to the kitchen as a very proper young lady, before whom abject airs were unnecessary. She followed Nancy to an apartment that certainly displayed the want of a mistress's eye. Bed and the rest of the furniture were as English looking as could be, but there was an indescribable something in the whole aspect of the chamber that seemed irreconcilable with English comfort. The floor attracted her notice, perceiving which the sharp attendant immediately exclaimed—

'Never fear ; 'taint dirt, miss ; it's the natural



look of them boards ; all florses looks dark out nere—it's the wood itself.'

Miss D'Urban, disconcerted at having her thoughts thus read, cast her eyes up far from the scene of her detection.

'Can't be helped, miss ; 'twould be all the same if the mistress were home ; 'tis them beastly flies, everywhere a buzzing and pitching,' again interrupted Nancy, as Bridget's sight involuntarily rested on two pieces of tape nailed crosswise through the ceiling—tape which had originally been white, but now was nearly black.

Poor Bridget ! where should she look from the Argus-eyed Abigail, who secretly enjoyed the stranger's discomfiture ? On the wall ? No ; the same fly-marks were thickly dotted on the pink wash, and the same resolute observer exclaimed—

'It's the verminous beasts again, miss ; there's no keeping the walls clean for 'em. Lor ! miss, they drops into the very tea you drinks, them great, lazy, brown buzzers ! and the milk, fay ! you should see it ! if it's left uncovered a minute, the vermin drops thick into it, so as you can't see what's under 'em.'

Bridget could not wear a disconsolate countenance long ; so after a shrug of disgust she broke into a merry laugh which rang through the room and right down stairs, and, as the summons of a

silver bell, brought little Charlie up to see what was the matter.

But it did not suit Nancy that the child should remain, so she unceremoniously turned him out, and on Bridget's looking—Why? the servant's ace drew to unwonted length.

'Why, miss, talking of them pests out here brings blessed old England to my mind, and natural-like I feel sad.'

'Oh, don't let us speak of England just yet, I can hardly bear it;' and Bridget's voice faltered in demonstration of the fact.

But the *effect* on Bridget was the *cause* with Nancy, a less softened moment might not further her views.

'Ah, if you can't bear it, miss, think of poor me, who's obliged to! *you* came free to the colony!'

Bridget started, and as if she had been guilty of a wanton reminder, crimsoned to her very temples.

The woman understood both start and blush, and determined to reap advantage from each. Shaking her head slowly and measuredly as the toll of a funeral bell, she answered—

'Ah, the likes to you may well start—yes! I'm government, been in the place five years come Christmas—I've seen better days at home—' Here she paused from emotion, and Bridget, feeling cruel to her fingers' ends, went over and laid her hand on her shoulder.

‘ I am very sorry ! I did not mean to hurt you, I had no idea you were—were—’

‘ A vile outcast !’ finished Nancy—‘ say it out, miss, say it out—Nay-ver mind, nay-ver mind ’—(with a slow up and down motion of the head between each syllable) ‘ you can’t hut me no more than I have been hutted already—you didn’t go for to do it.’

Bridget was ready to cry. More advantage still ! Suddenly starting from her apron in which her face had been hidden, Nancy exclaimed, clasping her hands—

‘ And how was the blessed old country looking ? Haven’t you never a flower or token to give a poor prisoner to mind her of her home ?’

‘ No,’ said Bridget, uneasily scanning her packages as if she hoped some compassionate spirit might forthwith cause a flower to spring from the dry leathers.

‘ Ah, all these dear things came from home !’ cried Nancy, spreading her arms circuitously over the heap of boxes, &c., as if she would pronounce a silent benediction on the lot. ‘ I could most fall down and worship ’em, one and all.’

Bridget was now fairly crying—the time had arrived. With a deprecatory smile, Nancy said, ‘ If you wouldn’t think a poor prisoner bold, miss, I’d ask you if you’d any old trifle to put me in thinking of the blessed country, where once I lived

as innocent as you—anything—an old dress you've done with on the voyage—ladies never wears their sea things to shore, the muggy feel of the vessel seems to cling to 'em; but they'd be treasures to *my* poor heart: to look on 'em and think where they come from would be worth a mint!

In an instant Bridget had taken out and given to Nancy two gowns she had half finished with, right glad to offer amends for the wounds she had inflicted. The woman was making away with her prize when Mr. Evelyn, sen. entered to escort his niece to tea. In a loud angry tone he demanded—

'How now, Nancy! have you been fooling this young lady? I guessed your work directly I heard you were closeted with her. Give those dresses back!'

'Uncle, uncle! indeed I gave them her; let her keep them for *my* sake, do.'

'Let her *keep* them! yes, for the next half-hour.' There was an inexplicable irony in the word *keep*, that made Bridget wonder.

Turning to Nancy, who stood cowed and lowly in the door, he nodded her away with—

'To oblige the young lady you may keep them, but mind you do, that's all.'

'I humbly thank you, sir,' dropped Nancy, denuded of all her former non-convict air.

Mr. Evelyn tapped his feet impatiently, but managed to say without impatience—

‘ Nancy, these tricks do not suit me.’

Bridget thought her uncle a most hard-hearted man. Why shouldn’t the poor thing feel sad; wasn’t it very natural a new arrival should elicit home tendencies? however, Mr. Evelyn’s manner had frightened her, so that she forbore to speak out her thoughts.

But Uncle Ev guessed them in her vexed look, and said in a grave but kind voice—

‘ You must learn a few practical lessons before you will be ready to allow the necessity of scenes similar to that which has just passed between Nancy and myself; those dresses will procure her a dram or two before the night has expired, and by to-morrow you will have a chance of meeting them in Goulbourn Street: keep a look-out for them, therefore—they are of so peculiar a pattern you cannot mistake them.’

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE PARACLETE.

‘ O weary souls! ye shall be blest  
 Eternally in God’s own rest :—  
 Outbursting from your night of gloom,  
 How bright with day’s unfading bloom  
 Shall shine the star that bids you free  
 From earth and earth’s captivity.  
 O pining souls! your God’s dear peace  
 Shall make your weary pinings cease.’

WE have seen the signal hoisted on Mulgrave Battery—the signal that spread an universal dissatisfaction through every free breast in Hobarton. As floated from the flagstaff that announcement that another ship-load of sin was about to disgorge itself on Tasmanian shores, a token also appeared to the captives on the transport. Yet no—though seen by all, two only of the prisoners accepted it as a token. To these two was it sent, to the others it was only a natural circumstance.

The convicts were assembled on the decks—every eye strained itself land-ward, every heart beat alternate throbs of hope, fear—fear, hope. The sun shone gloriously down, when very high in the

clear air a pure white speck was seen floating on a long bright ray. It came nearer and nearer, slowly descending, until, poising over the vessel and gently fluttering its spotless wing, a silver-winged dove attracted the gaze of all, and a deep hush of admiration fell on the hardest heart there. Radiant in the sunlight it seemed to rest a moment; then, gradually ascending, a cloud, that had almost suddenly appeared, received the wondrous creature out of their sight.

‘It has gone into heaven,’ mysteriously whispered Lucy Grenlow, as she clung to Maida.

Maida spoke not—her eyes had followed the heavenly visitant, and now that it had vanished from view she the more intently gazed on the point at which it had disappeared. She longed to pierce the cloud and trace the dove to its bright abode.

Not yet, poor Maida! The cloud must o’ershadow thee more deeply yet, ere thou mayst rend its veil and read the mystery of the peace of God. But surely as descended that silent messenger, so surely will thy God’s peace come down to thee on the rich rays of redeeming love. As surely as ascended that dove-like form, so surely mayst thou ascend to the bosom of thy Lord.

Partly awed by the expression of Maida’s face, and partly solemnised by the beautiful vision, Lucy remained silent for some time after her first ejacu-

lation, then feeling that her companion's eyes (withdrawn from the sky) were fixed on her, she said in a low voice—

‘It seemed to come most on purpose for us.’

Maida blessed the kindly utterance which granted her a share in the message: her own pride or humility would have forbidden her to claim a part. Had she spoken she would have said for *you* and not for *us*.

‘It's like the dove and peace of God that's on our church window at home,’ said Lucy, very reverently.

‘I'm going below, Lucy, for a little while,’ was Maida's only answer. \*

Following her to her quarters we see her look around to assure herself of solitude; we see her kneel and clasp her hands—one tear steals from the closed lid and bears a weight of sorrow with it to the ground. She takes her Bible from its shelf by her berth and opens to the fourth chapter of Philippians, and drawing a pencil line through the margin of the seventh verse, she shuts the sacred volume, replaces it upon the shelf, and joins her fellow-prisoners on the deck.

It was a transaction between God and her own soul, but one rendered null and void by a long train of after events which made her life a perpetual conflict. Had she at once gone from that transac-



tion to those who would have dealt with her as her peculiar temperament needed, it might have proved one of grand results. As it was, a temporary comfort alone was produced, and yet, unaware, she stored away the remembrance of the vision as a token for good.

## CHAPTER XV.

## UNCLE EV : AND UNCLE EV'S NOTIONS.

WE do not care to describe the persons of our heroes and heroines, for we deem a description superfluous. As the characters unfold an appropriate physical structure forms itself around them, affording a better habitation than we could devise.

Who that has heard of Uncle Herbert has not already pictured him a model clergyman in appearance ? Who has not pictured him tall, slight, with a spiritual expression in his pale face and finely chiselled features ? Who has not pictured him with a head whose partial baldness adds not age but dignity to his deportment ? or who has not discovered in his whole bearing a determination to follow his Divine Master whithersoever He may go, or whatsoever it may cost ?

Who has not portrayed Uncle Ev the exact opposite to this picture in all save height ? Who has not already invested in his person the following characteristics—good stature, robust make, an expression that means to be serious but more easily

conveys an idea of hearty good-humour, a sly lurk in his lip corners that belies the gravity of the lip itself, and a bushy head of black hair that can at once shake terror at convict servants or naughty children, and pass luxuriously through his fingers as he cracks his jokes with Bridget D'Urban?

Mr. Evelyn, senior, had been a police magistrate. Disgusted with the duties of this office he threw up his £500 per annum, choosing rather moderate independence and liberty of conscience, than wealthy dependence and slavery to the whims of every captious holder who chose to send his servant before him. He termed the appointment the 'Wash-tub Cove-ship,' once having heard himself called 'The Wash-tub Cove' by a party of female prisoners whom he had just sentenced to the Government Laundry. He had also been in the Executive, but weary of the farce justice was obliged to play in dealing with men already sentenced to the utmost rigour of secondary punishment—weary of the solemn absurdities of judicial proceedings as then existing in Van Diemen's Land—weary of the oft-recurring joke of dealing law to outlaws, or of punishing convicts for falling into traps laid for them by the neglect of their officers or the short-sightedness of senators—weary of all these, Mr. Evelyn, senior, resigned his seat in the Council.

Fond as he was of a joke, this gentleman ab-

horred practical jokes, a long series of which then formed the occupation of the Executive.

He had seen a woman, who was already transported for life for manslaughter, again committed amid the execration of the multitude for a similar attempt in Hobarton—and upon this woman, convicted of her second crime, he had heard passed the original sentence of transportation for life, so that while her former sin was still inexpiated her latter and aggravated guilt went wholly unpunished. Glad that the poor wretch had yet a space afforded her for repentance, Mr. Evelyn was not one to cry shame on the judgment, but, generous as were his feelings towards the murderess, he could not help casting a somewhat jealous eye on the ill accorded leniency when he paralleled it with sentences he had known: sentences which, had they been pronounced by the injured party, had been set down as the result of implacable revenge—had they been passed by the voice of the people had been attributed to excitement; but uttered neither by the prosecutor nor by the populace, Mr. Evelyn had only to turn with a blush from the bench where justice had dwindled to a heartless form.

Averse to his resigning a position at once respectable, remunerative, and responsible, his friends urged him to remain and use his influence towards reforming abuses, visible to all not blinded by the spirit of faction; but their persuasions were ineffec-

tive on Mr. Evelyn, as ineffective as would influence have been on a body of men who had but one feeling towards a member rendering himself obnoxious by opposition, namely, hatred ; and but one mode of meeting his objections, namely, removal, through ways and means of their own.

But with his public life Mr. Evelyn did not abandon a career of usefulness. Disgusted with the errors of judicial administration, and deploring a system which could never be reformatory until reformation commenced with itself, he prepared himself to do what it would be well if every reflecting man would do when disappointed in the performance of acts of public benevolence, namely, to try how most effectually he could serve the little circle drawn immediately around himself. The result of such an effort could not fail to be happy in any homestead. In one chiefly peopled by convicts, whose eyes literally turned more anxiously toward their owner than the day watchers toward the east, the effort repaid itself in ways unthought of in English homes. Had each colonist followed Mr. Evelyn's example, and exerted his influence over the few convicts under his care, how materially had Government been assisted in its weary planings for the moral improvement of the prisoner, and how unnecessary had been made the constant change of system, which between the years 1838 and 1852 exhausted the patience of state secre-

taries, annoyed the free, and oppressed the bond population. Had each holder put his shoulder to this mighty plough, with what comparative ease had Government directed it over the field of evil ! How had the assignment system realised both to the assigned and assignee the benefits it was reported to bestow ; how had the terrors of the ' Worse than death ' system been never needed, save to intimidate the incorrigible few ; and how had the nation's treasury held yet within its purse the countless thousands wasted on the probation system.

Mr. Evelyn did not advocate the influx of criminals to Van Diemen's Land ; he was as anxious for the promised removal of the penal badge as any of his colonial brethren ; but as a loyal subject and a responsible being, he determined, not, as many others, to shun bond labour and employ only free servants, but to take a willing share of the imposition whilst waiting the fulfilment of the long-cherished and oft-disappointed hope of every Tasmanian. He carried out his plan by becoming owner of a succession of pass-holders, with whose vices he bore until they either yielded to his unflinching strictness, or drained his power of endurance, which power was of unusual stability for one who drew it rather from the natural source of innate superiority than from the fountain of all good and perfect gifts. As a bachelor, he was not

allowed a female prisoner; a deprivation he only regretted for the pretext it afforded masters, who, too indolent or too incredulous to adopt his course of treatment, asserted that his success in certain reform cases was mainly attributable to the absence of corrupt female influence in his household.

Strictly subject to the penal regulations of the Comptroller General's office, Mr. Evelyn was guided by a theory of his own in dealing with his bond-servants. In selecting his men, he chose from those who were reckoned 'The Troublesome Set.' Though not the worst by rule of sentence or crime, the convicts of this order had frequently blacker police rolls than their more guilty brethren. The latter with brazen front and dilated nostril displayed a comparatively fair page, whilst the former hung their heads before the words, 'Stubborn,' 'Obdurate,' 'Disobedient,' denoting the superintendent's opinion of them.

Mr. Evelyn chose from this troublesome set, not from private pique, as some supposed, nor from perversity, as was amiably hinted by others, but because, according to his theory, the men comprising it were, with exceptional cases, more objects of pity than of punishment, and fitter for penitentiaries than for prisons. He divided this set into two classes:—Involuntary offenders and contingent offenders. The troublesomeness of the former arising from an inability to abstain from

whatever gratified their undeveloped moral appetites within the narrow scope of captivity; whose prison life was only a dumb show of what their free life had been; whose moral questionings extended no further than that point which led the child to ask, 'May I do *that*?' when her fingers were slapped for doing *this*.

Mr. Evelyn attributed the troublesomeness of the contingents to a still smarting sense of degradation incompatible with penal discipline. A round of punishments was, therefore, employed to coerce them into a proper state of indifference.

'It is hard for a feller that longs to be an honest man again to take kindly to things that comes easy to your born rogues, who tip their noses and at it again,' said one of this class found by Mr. Herbert in the cells. It appeared a strange oversight to Mr. Evelyn that such offenders should be confounded with the common body of criminals, and herded in transportation with felons who, but for an adroitness worthy of their calling, had years ago undergone the just reward of their sins.

To these two classes themselves, he by no means palliated their guilt, nor censured its chastisement; but in his heart, by action, and by official remonstrance, he charged with short-sightedness or blamed for indolence that system, which branded in one indelible infamy the poor wretch pushed into evil by sudden temptation—the unthinking youth hurried



on by the impulse of a fatal moment, and the bold outlaw who followed crime as his profession—mingling in one common condemnation the low moral perceptions of Sam Tibbins, and the perjured conscience and guilty genius of Mark Knocklofty or Michael Howe.

Having then no family ties to divide his time and labours, Mr. Evelyn engaged as many convicts as could find employment on his farm, the average number employed at one time being ten. In the same number of years, no fewer than two hundred prisoners passed through his hands. Several of the involuntaries, as unable to bear the kinder, though not less strict surveillance of their master, as the rigid enforcements of the penal code, absconded at once from his service and that restraint which, in accordance with his doctrine of mental deficiency, he thought proper to impose. Oblivious of past suffering, and unthinking of the future, these miserable beings would go off, to be taken, perhaps, within a stone's throw of the farm; or, after a few days' fasting in the bush, to deliver themselves up to Government for re-imprisonment and increased punishment. Discouraging as were these failures, they strengthened Mr. Evelyn's opinion of the irresponsibility of this class, and of their fitness rather for the mild coercion and competent control of the asylum, than for the vengeance of the law. With others of this class Mr. Evelyn lost all patience,

and, after a few months' trial, he returned them to the barracks. To run and not be weary in the race of well-doing, is only given to such an one as Mr. Herbert, who, starting not in his own strength, looks to Him who promises to sustain His servants in their moments of weakness and depression. When Mr. Evelyn sent these men back to Government, he thought he had borne with them to the verge of human endurance. It was not until some years later, when he watched his brother's uncomplaining yet deeply-tried patience, that he learned how far is the human standard of long suffering beneath the divine rule, as laid down in Matt. xviii., or that he perceived how valuable an ingredient is real and *judicious* piety in the administrative penal process. With a third portion of the involuntary delinquents, he was obliged to part for the benefit of his little community, they were so thoroughly weak-minded as to become the scapegoats of the flock.

With the fourth section he was successful, and though afterwards through temptation, or the negligence of less careful holders, some relapsed into trouble, many repaid his toil by turning out inoffensive and happy members of society; for not possessing sufficient sensitiveness to feel pain at loss of caste, they were only sensible of a superiority over their bond brethren still remaining on the Government books.

With the contingent offenders was Mr. Evelyn's

grand result. But this adjective must be taken comparatively (we do not pun on the degrees). By those who would use it only to express hundreds it must not be used ; but by those who remember that the redemption of the soul is precious, it may be uttered over the small band of prisoners rescued by their master's efforts from the moral wreck of transportation.

With the majority of this class he found the hardening process had far advanced—with some it had advanced beyond hope of recall : urged on by shame, ridicule, misery, bad example, and severity, it had left its victims ' as bad as they were made out to be.'

In a few the effect of indiscriminate treatment showed itself in mental disease, which yielded neither to genial influence nor medical advice. The moral energies could not arouse themselves from the shock of their fall. Restoratives came too late ; had they been applied *at first*, when the whole head was sick and the whole heart faint, they might have proved beneficial. But the judicial means resorted to having been penal, and not suiting the case, had aggravated it into madness or sunk it to imbecility. With such cases Mr. Evelyn could do no more than see them safely housed in New Norfolk, to rave or drivel out their life in the chief lunatic establishment of the Island.

With the remainder of the contingents was the

reward of his exertions, and the results before mentioned.

The moment they entered his service they were warned what they had to expect if they deceived or disobeyed their master; on the other hand, they were promised confidence, assistance, and forgetfulness of past misconduct, if they endeavoured to deserve such indulgence. And finding that neither warning nor promise was idle breath, an understanding arose between them and their owner which wrought advantageously to both. As servants, unless previously trained, or very young, they were not often accessions to domestic comfort.

After a year or two the ostler may become a tolerable cook, but meanwhile, where shall the family dine? A ploughman in due season learns the duties of a housemaid, but who attends to bedroom comforts, or pays for breakages during the term of his scholarship?

The homely cottager who comes in to his rusty rasher by his snug fireside knows nothing more of that rasher than that it once lived as a pig, and now has been cooked by his missus. He devours it, and the rancid taste is orthodox; were it less rancid or less rusty, he would be ready to cry out against witchcraft.

When a transported felon across the seas, that cottager is told to prepare his master's breakfast from the delicate sides of bacon hanging in the

pantry, he shakes his head and supposes that 'that there bacon isn't tanned half enough for the master. See his missus's at home, that's all! Why, 'tis as yaller as though he'd never growed white!' And to the end of his servitude he shakes disapproval of the goodly fitches, inly wishing that his missus at home could get 'a holt on 'em' to tan them so that a Christian could bear to look at them. The rust of home has worked as deeply into his heart as the touch of time into his wife's bacon; and he is too old to change his way of thinking to please even a convict owner, but, fortunately, that holder is not one who will scarify his heart, to try if by that means the canker of home longings may be eradicated.

The former blacksmith yearns for the roar of the mounting flame. In his delight at again having fire beneath his rule, he sets his master's kitchen chimney in a blaze, and whilst others rush to stop the warm proceeding, he coolly answers—

'Never fear—'taint half a-roaring yet!'

But such extravagances were only sources of amusement to Mr. Evelyn in his bachelor days. He knew, that to get more efficient servants he must go to a worse class of convict. And (apart from his benevolent motive in hiring the *Continents* and *Involuntaries*) he argued that the chief difference between them and other servants was, in

their mode of dealing with their master's property. They spilled the ale, the others drank it. They spoiled the dinner, the others stole it. They smashed the china, the others sold it. They bruised the plate, the others melted it. Therefore, as in either case, his beer, dinner, china, and plate were to meet an adverse fate, he would rather they should meet it honourably from a pair of stupid hands, than in the form of roguery.

But in after years, when gentler social interests demanded his first care, and the upspringing of a little family around him made it imperative that servants' capabilities should be equal to household requirements, he reversed his choice of convicts, and selected from those whose crimes were of the worst kind: such men could generally show the best police character.

Looking on punishment as one of the chances of their trade, they were prepared, not only to *bear* it, but to make the best of it; therefore, they passed their probation with fewer sentences than many who, as the poor contingent said, could not take kindly to these things.

These men were apt and clever servants. It was singular to mark how the extremities of London outlawry had sharpened their wits to encounter the emergencies of private life. Often, when the master turned in despair from some refractory item which refused to contort itself to

domestic necessity, the convict factotum, leering over his spit, would exclaim—

‘Bless you, sir, that’s nothink of a pass; hand ’em over this way, and he’s done.’

Returning the refractory item, there would be a cunning twinkle in his eye, which said plainly as any words—

‘There, thank my former craft for that.’

Could such men oftener fall to holders of Mr. Evelyn’s stamp, they would not so often relapse into crime. Under such masters, it might be with them as with those four of Mr. Evelyn’s whose reformation, commenced temporarily at first to save punishment, continued by way of experiment to prove how it would answer in a remunerative point of view; good sense deciding that it might be profitable to themselves, they launched into reformation as they would into any other speculation whose end was self-aggrandisement. Had they tried the experiment under a master who only regarded them as engines of labour, it might have failed; at once disgusting them and strengthening their still secret opinion that ‘honesty was *not* the best policy’ for rogues.

But Mr. Evelyn was very careful that the profit should be clear to the sight of these arch speculators, or he well knew, accustomed as they were to the subtle calculations of knavery, they would not cast in their lot with honest men.

How sordid a motive ! cries one ; to whom we would reply—Examine thyself, cast not the stone of censure at thy brother, though clad in convict gray, until, having searched thine own mental world, thou canst pronounce it free from root of selfishness, and pure from unholy promptings ; till then, lay by thy stone, and if heart may tell of heart, thou layest it by for ever !

In saying that Mr. Evelyn chose his men from the worst set, the English reader must not suppose reference to be made to that *most* unhappy class of all unhappy offenders, too aptly designated, in colonial phraseology, ‘Macquarie Harbour-dyed demons’ and ‘Norfolk Island-made desperadoes.’ With the Tasmanian reader there is no fear of such a misapprehension, he knows too well that between the worst set of the Launceston or Hobartton barracks, and the worst set of Macquarie Harbour or Norfolk Island, there exists a difference as distinct as between the spirits in Hades and the spirits in the place of torment. He knows too well that with a fearful significance, and not in a wanton waste of imagination, has the entrance to the former settlement been called ‘The gates of hell,’ and ‘The devil’s toll-gate,’ whilst not less significantly is the latter still named ‘The bottomless pit.’

*These* are places of which no one likes to speak, or only to speak in that whisper that expresses



‘thereby hangs a tale!’ No one dares to ask within hearing of a government officer—

‘Why is it said of Macquarie Harbour, “Whoever enters here must give up all hope of heaven?” And of Norfolk Island, “Here a man’s heart is taken from him, and there is given him the heart of a brute?”’

While all agree to leave to the dread up-clearing of that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be tried by the man Christ Jesus, the answer to that long mystery of Van Diemen’s Land, condensed in the question—

‘How is it that these places, formed for special reformation, have not only failed in their purpose, but have been evil in their effect on the felon, changing him from bad to worse, from a state of furious resistance to apathetic despair, from fear of death to hatred of life?’

English hearers of the question cannot reply, Because you cannot expect men of such character to amend under any treatment; or the Tasmanian inquirer, unsatisfied, will ask, To what purpose, then, is all this waste? Do we prepare for results which we do not expect? If we anticipate no amendment, why all these appliances to meet it? The harvestman sends not forth his reapers into a field from which he looks for no grain. The implements of reform stare us in the face in these penal settlements; punishment,

therefore, cannot be the alone object of the mighty prisons.

Leave it! leave it! In that day will it be seen whether these implements of reform have been faithfully wielded, or whether they have been allowed to gather rust amidst the rank culture of the moral desolation, or whether they have been misapplied and turned into weapons of torture. Leave it! leave it! The throne shall be set and the books of judgment shall be opened. Inquisition shall then be made.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## DOUBTS ON MORE SUBJECTS THAN ONE.

SEE all that is to be seen at the earliest opportunity, was Bridget's practical maxim. She had no notion of waiting till ten o'clock, if her curiosity might be satisfied at eight or six. She had seen an evening in the antipodes; she now longed to see a morning. As yet no tokens of semi-barbarism had come under her notice; but might not the darkness have covered them? What might not the light of day reveal? She had marked the sun go down with his wonted glory; no peculiarity distinguishing his setting, save, perhaps, a deeper curtain of radiance drawn upon his exit. But then the sun—who expects peculiarities of him? Is he not the world's own sun, and not exclusively Australia's? She retired to rest, determining to be up at daybreak, in order to see how morning realities bore out evening impressions, and how evening impressions bore on morning realities.

She lay awake many hours revolving the events

of the day, and pondering the mystery that had borne her to the uttermost parts of the earth. One minute she would close her eyes, and the sway of the vessel still seeming to lull her, she would fancy the outward-bound yet on its unaccomplished way. The next minute she would remember that the berth had merged into the bed; the sense of motion being only a vibration of the past. Complicated thoughts entangled her mind into a pleasant confusion she had neither power nor wish to put in order. The wonder of being in a new world, the doubt that she had ever existed in another, crossed and recrossed each other in her mind; and when she tried to decide between them, a long line of moonlight shone into the room and seemed to glide in between the wonder and the doubt, playing fitfully on one, and then upon the other, making decision still more difficult; then suddenly retreating, it left a question upon her soul, 'Is it all a dream?' and as the question came unallowed yet irresistibly into her thoughts, a silvery acacia waved its feathery branch, and cast a faint nodding shadow, which seemed in dumb show to answer, 'Yes, a dream! a dream! dream-like as this—vanishing—vanish—' and ere the word could finish, Bridget started up—her spirits full of wonders and doubts, moonbeams and shadows—to ascertain what was dream and what reality. The long line of light was not a dream,

though withdrawn from her room, for there it lay upon the lawn; and the shadow? It was as much a reality as could any shadow be; for yonder upgrew the feathery acacia still sending it forth in the wake of the fickle beam. Her mental perplexity nothing satisfied by the discovery, set itself to solve a host of other problems. What had wonders, doubts, moonbeams, shadows, and dreams in common, that they should all mingle in her thoughts? but problem brought on problem, until hopeless of fathoming the least, she exclaimed, 'It is so horrid not to know what anything means.' But the cry brought no good fairy with magic touch to arrange the tangled meshes into a fabric wherewith to clothe her ideas in a presentable form.

A moment more and one of Bridget's own laughs aroused herself to consciousness of being neither dream nor shadow, but a fair, well-proportioned substance lying snug and warm in a more comfortable bed than she had known for four months, whilst the self-same moon she had loved at home, and the bright cross that she had learnt to love since it had first looked down on her from southern skies, hung calm and beautiful just over head, where she could gaze on them without raising herself from her pillow. She then bethought her of her laugh, and feared it had gone in to Emmeline; she well knew what a tell-tale it

would be. So, determined to follow it on tip-toe to see what mischief it had done; noiselessly opening her cousin's door, she peeped in, and saw Emmeline sitting up with an anxious expression of countenance, as if listening to some uncommon sound.

'Did I frighten you with my nocturne, Em, darling?'

Emmeline only laid her finger on her lip in reply. Then beckoning Bridget to her, whispered—

'I feel rather uneasy. I have a vague sense of something wrong.'

'If it was a laugh that disturbed you, it was mine.'

'No, no; what I heard was hardly to be called a noise—it was more a feeling than a sound—there!' and Emmeline again hushed with her finger, and then pointed to a shadow which passed slowly across the window.

'Tis the acacia!' cried Bridget, in a tone of feigned mirth.

But no one can make merry under the influence of midnight whispers and shadows; and though she firmly believed her assertion respecting the acacia, she by no means relished the few steps she took towards the window in order to prove the assertion. As she stood looking out on the moonlit landscape, she observed a figure dart from behind a tall, ghost-like gum-tree, and spring over

the slip rail into an adjoining paddock, where it vanished. She fancied she heard a window shut up stairs, and then a repressed footstep in the room in which the window seemed to be. With a presence of mind she would not have exhibited ere her intimacy with Emmeline, she turned quietly round, and said—

‘You are nervous, perhaps, dear Em, after your fatigue and excitement. I’ll sit with you a little, as I am not inclined to sleep.’

Em silently acquiesced, for she, too, had observed the figure dart away, her raised position giving her a side view of the lawn; but appreciating Bridget’s intended kindness, she forbore to reveal her knowledge.

‘It is all so new and strange, I can’t sleep, Em. People ar’n’t disturbed like this every night in Van Diemen’s Land are they?’

‘Like what?’ asked Emmeline, smiling.

‘Oh, fancying they hear noises and see shadows,’ replied Bridget, recollecting herself. ‘I hate noises in the night, and fancying one hears them is almost worse than really hearing; it makes one feel so warm, and cold, and horrid.’

‘I am not alarmed now, Bridget; I guess what has been going on. Robbers take care not to leave their shadows behind them.’

A tap at the door interrupted her, and Nancy entered.

‘A thousand pardons. I feared the dear lady might be affrighted if she heard the queer-like steppings about, as have waked me up. I heard you talking, so just came down to explain, that you needn’t be frightened; the loss is all mine—them nasty blackguards have runned off with them two blessed gownds you gave me. I just hanged them up to get a bit of the fust out of ’em, and, sure enough, they’s gone! I felt unaisy-like all to a sudden, as I laid in my bed. Fay! thought I, my blessed gownds! I jumped out, and looked from the window just in time to see ’em walked off—the shabby brutes!’

‘I am glad to see you bear your loss so well,’ quietly replied Emmeline. ‘Mr. Evelyn will doubtless try to detect the thieves.’

‘Thank you, miss; but I’m unwilling to fret the master about it. He’s too good to be troubled with prisoners’ losses and crosses. We won’t say nothing to him, please, miss. It’s the lot of all in this world.’

‘Poor Nancy; I’m very sorry; perhaps I may be able to find you something instead,’ sympathised Miss D’Urban.

‘Fay! Miss, you’re altogether a saint! To think of the poor convict having a friend like you in this troublesome world! But I won’t break in no longer on you, ladies. I shouldn’t have done so at all, only I heard you talking, and feared you



were frightening yourselves, and might go and wake the master ; and I hadn't the heart to let you do that.'

'Thank you kindly, Nancy. Now do go ; good night,' said Bridget.

Emmeline only gravely bowed her head, with a significant and grieved expression.

'Then the master need know nothing about it,' whispered Nancy, putting her head in at the door.

'Why, Em, from the way you used to speak of them, I thought you would be a very champion for the poor prisoners.'

'Would that I could be ! But, Bridget, you would not have me championize their falsehoods ?'

'Now I hope you are not going to make out that Nancy's story is untrue. I shall hate this place if I have to doubt every one's word. What end would the poor thing have in pretending to lose her clothes ?'

'It seems she has gained one end already, in the promise of a second present ; and I guess she has another ; but ask Uncle Ev for enlightenment on this subject.'

'Very well ; and in the mean time, Miss Em, I beg of you to remember your own favourite injunction : " Charity hopeth all things." '

'Hoping against hope, dear Bridget. There is an apostolic injunction I can better follow in the

present case, and in all moral emergencies: "Pray without ceasing."'

'Ah! that *suits* you. I can better hope than pray: I hope because I can't *help* it; there is something so bright and sunny in it, that I naturally hope. Mine isn't, I fear, the sort St. Paul speaks of; in fact, mine is *nature*, and not *grace*. There now, don't look so grave, my sweet; I am not going to play on religion's holy ground—I did not mean to then. Scripture language is so much more expressive than any other; it says so much in a few words, that one uses it without intending it sometimes.'

'Give me a few of its precious words then, Bridgy, will you? *I* want a great deal said in a few words, for I am very tired—just a few words to fall asleep with—that, as good Bishop Ken says, my dreams may be devout—the thoughts of God blocking up the avenues of sin—so that no evil may creep in to disturb my mind, whilst the will lies quiet with the body.'

'Why, I never noticed it! It is light enough to read without a candle; what glorious moonlight! Yes, positively.' And Bridget, having opened her Bible, commenced:—'There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.'

'Think of that, Bridget! What an eternity of

blessing expressed, but not explained, in that one short line: "There shall be no night there." Go and tell the weary labourer that henceforward there shall be no more night, and you proclaim his death-warrant. No night! how, then, can he rest? Must it be toil—toil—without intermission? Then, indeed, will his days be shortened, and end prematurely in that long night, of which no one can deprive him. No night! go, tell the man of sorrows so, and he will ask, despairingly, Where, then, shall I hide my grief? where seek a respite from my tears? Tell the little child that is worn out with his play, he still must gambol on, for there is no more night, and he will hate the very thought of play, that must supersede his pleasant sleep. Where, then, the blessing, in the absence of night? Angels only could explain it; and the explanation would be a long list of heavenly joys, beyond our heart's conceiving—a list so long that inspiration has forborne to give it, but summed it up in that one whisper of heaven: "There shall be no night there."—No sin needing the night to cover it; no sorrow, to seek the oblivion of sleep; no weariness, to demand a few hours' rest; no time for night, for the song ceases not; no place for night, for the light of eternity can find no dark mountains to drop behind,—no sea of trouble to set beneath—it must shine on; no need for night, for the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick."

There will be none to cry, "Would God it were morning!"'

Emmeline stopped short, and, fixing her eye earnestly on her cousin, exclaimed—

'Tired as I am, the mere thought acts as a foretaste of that cup of refreshing which the Lord God will put into his servants' hands, instead of the bitter cup which now—.' But she checked herself, lest Bridget should think she referred to her own trial. Grateful as was the loving sympathy of her friends to her yearning spirit, she would never draw extraordinarily on it by complaints, nor exhaust it by continual demands, in the form of attitudes expressive of fatigue and pain. 'Now, then, if you will leave me, I think I can sleep,' she said, her voice of rapture sinking to a whisper; 'and I'm sure a vote of thanks is due to shadows and Nancy; for to them we owe this nocturnal visit, and *I* this kiss.'

Bridget buried her face on Emmeline's pillow, and a series of minor kisses, ending in one long, loud chirrup, told *how much* she owed to Nancy's disturbance.

She was rather pleased than otherwise to have had so queer a sort of night—it was next best to a decided adventure—and she was almost on the point of commencing there and then her V. D. L. diary, with a description of it, when hearing the watch-dog bark violently, she jumped into bed, and

tired out with her long vigil was soon asleep, and awoke not until the bright sun shining in through her uncurtained windows, startled her to the fact that she was already too late to see how morning dawned in Tasmania, while Uncle Ev's cheerful whistle on the lawn told her that the sun was not the only early riser.

Her first morning in another world! And *such* a morning! full of fragrance, flowers, sunsmiles, and songs. Yes, *songs*; let who will say to the contrary. The heart that loves animation and mirth stays not to criticise the notes of the bird that gives life to the scenery. Unless the sounds be decidedly unmusical, they pass into and form a part of the loveliness which it admires, and from which it receives a mighty pleasure. Bridget stood in quiet admiration, looking out on the prospect—now on the distant Derwent, sparkling in its first moments of wakefulness—and then on the nearer beauties of her uncle's pleasure-grounds—attracted now by the thousand delicate tufts of the golden wattle, as it seemed to bow towards her for the express purpose of welcoming her with its earliest and freshest perfume, and then wondering if by any chance the tall, stiff gum-tree could come down from its would-be stateliness, and bend with the graceful wattle, but at the same time feeling quite satisfied that the said gum-tree should remain unchanged, there was something foreign in its

gaunt, smooth, whitewashed-looking trunk, with its eccentric ragged leaves overhanging it from the top, like an old-fashioned umbrella of doubtful colour, torn into shreds. Since she had come so far, it was only fair that some objects should reward her expectations, by giving a touch of foreignness to the country. In the midst of thus feeling and thinking, a commotion in the bushes, and a sudden flight of birds thence to the fence, and from the fence back to the bushes, aroused a home-yearning in her breast, and made her contradict her previous wish with a desire that nothing should be foreign, but that everything should look as much like England as possible: she then recollected to listen to the birds which, before unnoticed, had been most jubilant—ever since the first streak of light, and having listened, not critically, but as if entering into the spirit of their joy, she exclaimed—

‘Why they *do* sing! at any rate as well as most of our English birds.’

‘I was to tell you, miss, that Miss Evelyn sleeps, to prevent your going and waking of her up,’ spoke a voice that rather unceremoniously disturbed Bridget in her dream of home.

‘Who told you so, Pridham?’ (The servant she had first seen.)

‘The new Mr. Evelyn, miss; he said he’d peeped in and saw her fast asleep—at least he

didn't tell me to tell you, but I thought I'd better—as I know'd you waited upon her like.'

'You are very kind and thoughtful, but you shouldn't say that my uncle bade you come if he did not,' replied Bridget, frightened at her audacity in venturing a reproof.

'I beg pardon, miss, 'twasn't meant; please not to mention it to master; really out here a poor girl gets into trouble 'fore she knows where she is. I've had a month at the suds for less than that 'fore now, not by he though' (meaning Mr. E., senior), 'I've not been here long enough to know his ways; but they say he's harder upon fibs than anything; so I'm 'fraid of my life at every word I speak to him—not knowing exactly what he counts fibbing—but *I* knows what suds are pretty well!'

'And what are the suds, Pridham?'

'One of the factory works; the women hates it next worst to doing of nothing.'

After a few moments' silence on Pridham's part, and uneasiness on Bridget's, the former said—'I've forgotten now what I came for. I mean, miss, next to telling about the young lady; I wanted to put you on your guard against that there Nancy—she's the dangerousest woman ever I came across—and all the while she'd make a body believe she's innocent and after peacemaking. The deceit of her is worth hearkening to. Them blessed gowns! as she kept on about after you'd given 'em

her—precious blessed indeed—if they was blessed when *she* took hold of them they weren't blessed long after; but there, I don't want to set you up against her, only just to put you on your guard when next you gives away, to give where things will be valued. I don't speak for myself, for I have just worked out a new gown for best, and be content with this here brown one till next month, when I've worked out another for mornings. The master isn't hard, though he's partic'lar.'

'What does it all mean? I have got into a hornet's nest indeed,' thought Bridget, and with her natural dislike to the shadowy side of life, she half wished herself home again: *these* were not the sort of 'kitchen rows' she professed to cure. With a mixture of real and pretended impatience, she said—

'Well, really, I am tired of hearing of those gowns; I shall think twice before I give any again.'

'Oh! I don't want to put you in that mind anyhow; we all admires your generosity, and hopes it won't be the last of it—it's only Nancy there we're 'fraid of—trouble always comes out of what she lays hands to; if trouble don't come out of them gowns, I'm—but there, I don't want to say no more about 'em; only if you will be so good as to mind if trouble does come, *I* haven't had a finger in it. I am so 'fraid what the master 'll



make out, though he isn't hard, only partic'lar; and no wonder! out here we're obliged to suspect everybody, and if I'm gover'nment and says it, what must them as come out free say?'

'Pridham, I'm very sorry, but really I don't understand all this; it's all strange to me yet. If I say or do anything to hurt any one's feelings, I shall be very grieved, and—'

It was now Pridham's turn to look mystified. What had she said about hurt feelings or grieving? she had only wanted to turn the tide of favour towards herself by closing it to Nancy; and also by making a premature declaration of innocence to disclaim all share in trouble, which with prisoner instinct she foresaw in 'them two blessed gowns.' The convict always fears that which he cannot at once understand, lest it should embody some new evil to himself, and always mistrusts that which he cannot immediately explain, lest it should be another means of extending his punishment under pretext of ameliorating it. Though the occasion was slight, this applied in the present case. Through the prisoner instinct, terror quickly followed Pridham's misapprehension of Miss D'Urban's words, and interpreted them into all manner of scoldings, deprivations, and perhaps even the dreaded wash-tub; so clasping her hands and bursting into tears, she besought Bridget 'not to tell on her.'

'Oh! miss; I pray on you not to tell the

master. I didn't mean for to offend. 'Twasn't insolence, indeed; no it wasn't! Poor girls like me gets into trouble 'fore they knows where they are. I knows I fibs dreadful; but believe me, miss, I never finds out I have fibbed until they tells me so, and punishes me for it. I will confess that I did hint for you to give me something, so please to forgive me; but indeed I never went for to grieve or hurt you like what you said. 'If Nancy gets a hold on this, she'll make fine work against me out of it.'

The look of penitence and fright in the girl's face was pitiable in the extreme. Bridget wondered still more what it all meant, and wished herself home again with increased violence. Since promise of secrecy seemed necessary to Pridham's happiness, she gave it her, though in utter ignorance of what she was *not* to divulge as of what there *could be* to divulge in the long addresses of the distressed damsel.

Thinking as despondingly of the future as it was possible for her hopeful mind to think, Bridget descended to the breakfast-parlour, where sat Uncle Herbert, lost in reverie and the comfortable cushions of a large arm-chair. She had knelt by his side and kissed his hands ere he perceived her.

'God bless you, my child, and make you a blessing in this strange land! What think you of

it? There is not a favourable report on your face. You have not your wonted sunbeam there.'

'Oh! Uncle Herbert; I've been sad and pleased twenty times over since I got up. First I was in raptures with the beautiful landscape over the water; then I was sad to remember it wasn't home; then I fell in love with that pretty yellow tree and with all the flowers—in fact with everything; and then, one of the prisoner-servants came in, and all my joy went in a moment. I hate seeing people miserable.'

'Where every prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile,'

said Mr. Herbert Evelyn, rising, and drawing Bridget's arm into his.

'Your Uncle Ev has not returned yet; let us take a turn in the garden, and talk all about it.'

'Not about the prisoners; oh! no; I vote we don't; it's so horrid! Really, whatever one says or does something comes out about those poor creatures. I didn't think it would be at all like this, and directly I arrived too.'

'Like what? Something has annoyed you, or you would not have had an opportunity of comparing likenesses.'

'You mustn't laugh at me, or I shall get in a flutter and not be able to explain myself.'

'I am in no laughing mood, my love. Go on, and tell me all you mean, and what has happened.'

‘Oh! no, you dear, good Uncle Herbert; you have too many real troubles to be vexed with my little nonsenses. I must learn to laugh at them.’

‘God forbid, dear child! anything but that; as all domestic trials you meet with here are likely to spring from the one great cause of this country, it would be as wanton to laugh at them as ineffective to rail at them. Rather let us weep and mourn; but still rather let us seek to allay them by means of the talents God has committed to our keeping.’

‘I’m afraid I shall never be any use. When I think I’ve done something right, it proves just the contrary. If I hadn’t been quite new yesterday, I am sure Uncle Ev would have given me a regular scolding about those stupid gowns.’

Uncle Herbert pressed her hand gently, and whispered—

‘I remember something *very* right you once did. I may have to thank you for it for ever.’

A quick, bright glance from Bridget, with a sigh,—

‘God’s will be done, my precious Emmeline!’ from Mr. Herbert; and, by a mutual understanding, that something very right was not discussed save in the heart of each.

Notwithstanding the sadness of their subject, the shadows were fading from Bridget’s face. If not on the sunny side of life, she was in the light

of heaven, and it was not in her to resist the beams that strewed a gilded path before her. It was not long before she had loosened her hold of Uncle Herbert's arm, by several short, sudden skips, denoting the presence of intuitive gladness welling up from the sparkling fountain within through all depressing obstacles.

‘But, Bridget, you have not yet confided your disappointments to me, nor told me where exists the difference between what you expected and that which you find.’

‘Naughty Uncle Herbert; you are determined to make me ashamed of myself. As if I wasn't that long ago! Well, then, what I mean is this: I did not expect that prisoners would so mix with us as they do in every-day life, making us afraid to look or speak lest we should hurt their feelings or get them punished. I knew there would be hundreds of convicts, but thought they would be such dreadful creatures we should only be shocked at them; and I thought there would be dreadful affrays with them sometimes; but I never dreamt of such trumpery annoyances coming out of the commonest sayings and doings, making one uncomfortable in such curious ways. It will be wretched if it is always going to be like this.’

‘No, no; it is not always going to be like this. It will only be so whilst Miss D'Urban is learning not to give gowns in exchange for crocodile tears

and Judas kisses, exclaimed Uncle Ev, who, having stabled his horse, had just entered a path of the garden, divided from where his niece lingered by a tall hedge of sweetbriar and geranium, and he now stood opposite, yet concealed from her. Bridget did not yet understand him, and still harbouring suspicions of his hardheartedness, she felt half afraid that the suppressed scolding of last night might be forthcoming now. But doubt decreased when an instant after his well-whiskered, smiling face nodded to her through a break in the hedge. He then jumped over a lower bush, and, coming to her side, gave her so kind a welcome that she began to think she had only just arrived.

‘No, no, Miss Bridget; they are only trying it on. If nobody else obeys Scripture, prisoners out here do. They work while it is called to-day, before the night of experience frustrates their endeavours to get what they want from a new-comer. When you are more up to their ways, they’ll leave you alone. In other words, when they’ve got what they can out of you, they’ll forget all their home conceits and predilections.’

‘But, uncle, it appears that so much is made out of nothing, just because they are poor prisoners. It seems so very natural to me that Nancy should be affected as she was, and—’

‘Well, well, so it is; and something else as

natural to convict principle will follow the natural gift of those gowns, or I'm very much mistaken.'

'Then you *are* mistaken! for they have both been stolen from her. Em and I heard a noise in the night, and shortly after Nancy came in and told us some rogues had taken them off the line and ran away with them.'

'And how much of that do you believe?' asked Mr. Evelyn.

'Why, George, I think it is only fair that *she* should believe it all.'

'On the principle, Let her believe while she can, and don't make a sceptic of her before her time? Well, there is something in *that*; but at the same time, is it not fair, for her own protection, to teach her the grand cautionary axiom of Van Diemen's Land: "Believe every man a rogue until you have *proved* him to be honest"—the antipodes of English etiquette: "Every man is honest until he is proved a rogue."'

'Thank you, uncle; the longer I defer learning that the better. But what you say reminds me of a question Emmeline bade me ask. She says, Nancy had two ends in view in pretending she had lost the dresses; one was, the hope of getting another present, and the other you are to tell me.'

'Well, the other I pronounce to be decidedly spiritual. Yes, no doubt she had a spiritual end in view, eh! Herbert, does that suit you?'

A look of remonstrance was the clergyman's only answer; and when Bridget's eye asked an explanation from Uncle Ev, he only nodded, 'Time will show,' and proceeded to conduct her to the house. When near the verandah, he stopped. 'A word with you, Bridget. I am very careful how I express my opinions of the convicts before my boy Charlie. He is a thorough little specimen of all ears and eyes. Any point you want cleared up ask me when the young rogue is out of hearing.'

A loud bell rang as soon as Mr. Evelyn's step sounded in the hall. Mr. Herbert exclaimed, 'Ah! it's the voice of a dear old friend. Prayers, George, is it not?'

Uncle Ev nodded assent.

'Here, at any rate, we are one with England. The same hope unites us—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Father. Over this precious book all distinctions cease and distances diminish,' continued Uncle Herbert, laying his hand on the family Bible. 'Here we are told of One from whom neither height nor depth can separate us. No sea can roll its intervening wave between us and His love.'

'Shall I commence? where are the servants? are they not coming?'

'No; I don't choose it;' promptly replied the elder brother, in a tone which implied, ask no questions.



Prayers being over, Charlie followed his cousin into the verandah, to await the breakfast. As soon as he was beyond hearing, Mr. Evelyn said—

‘The truth is, Herbert, in not permitting my people to attend prayers, I choose the less of two evils. During the ten years I devoted myself to the prisoners, though I didn’t deem it necessary to carry the religious system so far as you, being a clergyman, are obliged to—’

‘And wish to,’ interposed Mr. Herbert.

‘Well, and wish to — I allowed them all religious privileges that seemed expedient. *Now*, being surrounded by a different class of convicts, I find I cannot admit them to an indiscriminate use of the family’s religious services. I’ve tried to forego prejudices, but each new trial only strengthens me in them, and I now think it little short of mockery to call in the servants to prayers, knowing as I do that most of them are living in open sin.’

‘Papa, isn’t breakfas’ ready?’ cried Charlie, peeping in at the window.

‘What is the maid thinking about? it’s a quarter to nine, and half-past eight is the breakfast hour. Ring the bell, my boy.’

The child’s entrance put a stop to the discussion, and brought wholesome thoughts of physical requirements to the gentlemen’s minds. But the bell had to give three increasingly loud peals

before one answer could be obtained, and that came from Pridham, not from cook.

‘Please, sir, it’s no doing of mine. I’ve tried to rouse her, she’m reg’lar beastly down. I can’t go nigh of her, she vows she’ll see you blasted ’fore she gets the breakfast, and she says she’ll crack me if *I* go for to get it.’

‘Ah! ah! ah!’ screamed Charlie, clapping his hands, ‘what fun! Papa, let me come too.’

‘Go back, sir!’ sternly answered the father, as he prepared to descend to the kitchen, whilst a coarse song, in uproarious starts, sounded from below.

‘What is the matter, Charlie?’ eagerly inquired Bridget, feeling frightened enough to be glad of even his small company.

‘Oh! nothing. I spose she’s intosticated. Hark; there’s such a row, I spose they’re fighting.’

And off ran the little fellow to the head of the stairs. In a moment he ran in again, his cheeks flushed with excitement.

‘Come, Bridget, come. I can’t see them, but I can hear.’

Pale with terror, poor innocent Bridget clung to the back of a chair; but recollecting what Uncle Ev had said, she caught back Charlie, as for the third time he was running out.

‘Darling, come in; ’tisin’t fit for you. What would papa say?’

‘I don’t care ; I will, I will,’ shouted the child, trying to get free from his cousin’s grasp.

‘No, no ; be my dear Charlie, and stay.’

‘I won’t ; I don’t want to be anybody’s dear Charlie ; I want to go down and see it.’

When the two Mr. Evelyns reached the kitchen, they found the cook sitting Turk-fashion on the floor with a pipe in her mouth : a piece of white tape tied her stunted locks in one matted bunch on the top of her capless head, her dress was half on on one side, and from the other hung her prison jacket. Perceiving her master, she staggered to her feet, and squared towards him.

‘Come on my hearty, them that wants their breakfast must fight for it—as the dogs does.’

Another step towards them and down she flounced ; but not so as to hurt herself ; then came a torrent of abuse that made Mr. Herbert close his eyes with pain, and Mr. Evelyn stamp in disgust.

‘If you move from your place I’ll souse you, so please sit still,’ at last said the latter, knowing that anger or disgust would be wasted on the miserable being before him.

Thump, thump, thump, went her thick boots, in determination not to be still though she was obliged to keep her seat.

‘I—s’pose—constable’s coming,’ she stammered.

‘Presently,’ answered Mr. Evelyn ; ‘and the

less you rave now, the less will be your punishment by-and-by.'

Mr. Herbert had remained a spectator only in case of violence.

'Have you sent for one?' he now whispered.

Mr. Evelyn nodded, and in another moment in walked a constable. He went straight over to the woman and began to drag her by her arms. She set up a terrible howl and offered what resistance lay in her power.

'Leave her alone, sir,' commanded Mr. Evelyn, in his sternest voice; 'how often have I requested that when a constable comes to my house, he will perform his duty in a decent manner—fetch a cab, the woman does not go without.'

A cab having arrived, the man again commenced to drag the prisoner. Mr. Evelyn again remonstrated, and assisted the poor wretch to the vehicle.

'Now, remember; I'll never have a public spectacle made of such degrading sights when they come from *my* house.'

'Stay, I'll go with her,' said Mr. Herbert; then in an under tone, 'It is not right she should be left to his tender mercies. I know him, he should not be in his present position at all.'

The constable's heavy brow contracted extra surliness, as the clergyman stepped into the cab; but unheeding of his anger, Mr. Herbert took his seat by the loathsome, and now almost unconscious

object of his solicitude, and with his peculiar tact commenced a conversation irrelevant to the subject before them.

‘ Well, Bradley, it is a long time since we met. I have been in England since then.’

No answer save a gruff—Hum.

‘ Have you received the news you were expecting from your wife, when I took leave of you all? How is she now?’

‘ Gone to the devil for all I care.’

‘ Indeed! I am sorry for that; when did she go?’ and Mr. Herbert turned his calm yet searching eye full into the rough, inquisitive who-be-you? sort of face, that jerked quickly towards him in answer to this unexpected sympathy.

Let it work, thought Mr. Herbert; in a few moments he asked—

‘ Have you your ticket yet, Bradley?’

‘ No, nor never shall, if he can help it.’

‘ What, the old story! we must talk it over.’

Another silence, broken by Bradley.

‘ I have been in the boat’s crew at Port Arthur, since you went; got down there for heaving a log at Bill Scroggins; it missed him, or I should have swung for it the magistrate said; but I’ll have a heave at he yet, for all that.’

The malicious tone and grin which accompanied this speech prevented Mr. Herbert from noticing it; he knew it was said on purpose to annoy him.

It had ever been Bradley's delight to 'shock the parson's fine notions.'

When Uncle Ev returned to the breakfast-less breakfast-table, he found Charlie in a sulky fit, and Bridget trembling with the apprehension that her ill-fated gift had had somewhat to do with the morning's outbreak; she was, therefore, much relieved when her uncle told her that cook and Nancy were distinct personages.

'Oh, I am so glad! then Nancy is all right, and it has nothing to do with—with '—she was too tired of the gowns to mention them even.

'I'm not quite so sure of that;' but seeing his niece's look of vexation, whatever might have been his thoughts, Mr. Evelyn forbore to say more. A fourth call of the bell brought Pridham, with a face full of alarm—for what might not that bell portend to her?

'Let Nancy do what she can towards the breakfast, we must content ourselves with toast this morning.'

'Please, sir, I can't wake Nancy—I've been tugging at her this long time; she'm dead asleep,' whimpered Pridham.

The storm burst!—

'It's all a scheme, *you* are as bad as either of them; tell me all you know of this; hide anything at your peril,' stamped Mr. Evelyn,

having controlled himself to the limit of his patience. -

‘ I don’t know nothing.’

‘ It’s a lie, you do.’

‘ I don’t know no more than that a man was here late last night a talking with Nancy; and that he took away a jar with ’em, and left another.’

‘ You know a great deal more, and you tell me, directly.’

‘ How should a poor girl know everything, when she’s ’fraid of getting into trouble?’

‘ Nonsense—no humbug—go on.’

‘ When the man was gone, Nancy says, “Cook, them gowns smell awful fusty-like; I think a night’s airing would fresh ’em a bit. I saw her wink to cook, and cook winked back to her; then when she came from hanging them out-to-door she shrugs her shoulders, and says—

“ I feel awful creamy-like, and nervous to sleep alone—”

“ Shall I sleep with you?”” says I.

‘ You had no business to offer that,’ parenthesised her master.

‘ No, sir; I know it was wrong, but—’

‘ No humbug—go on.’

‘ “ Why, no,” says she; “ you sleeps with the young un, ’twouldn’t do for you to change beds;” she winked to cook and didn’t think I saw her,

so cook says,—“My humble sarvices to you, Nancy, if you are ill. You’m welcome to me for a bedfeller if you think the master won’t hollar.”’

‘ “No, he’d say ne’er a word, when ’twas for sickness,” and she winked again.

‘ So they slept together?’

‘ I s’pose as they did, sir.’

‘ Nonsense, you know they did, and you know all the rest; but as I’ve heard enough for my purpose, you may go.’

‘ There won’t be no trouble for me, please sir?’

‘ If I find you have spoken truth, and have had no *further* share in the matter, I shall not punish you.’

‘ I haven’t had no share at all.’

‘ Go—I don’t choose to be answered; you took the share of not telling me that they were planning for drink.’

All Pridham’s fears of being charged with, and chastised for insolence again bristled up, and she in proportion shrunk down. Humbling her voice and attitude to the very lowest depths of servility, she whined—

‘ I didn’t mean for to say it; telling of them things would be getting into trouble, quite as bad as Government trouble.’

‘ I repeat—no nonsense, Pridham; remember, wherever you have lived out before—you are now



with a master who will not punish without reason. Now, go into Nancy's room and search about for the jar and bring it to me, don't touch the woman; then lock the door and give me the key.

Pridham left to obey this order, feeling convinced of what before she had only quoted from hearsay, namely, that the master wasn't *hard*, though precious partic'lar.

'What, Charlie, you here? how often have I insisted on your leaving the room when you see me engaged with the servants,' said Mr. Evelyn.

He was just at that point of irritation which vents itself on the first object in its way; not his child even could escape. Mortification also had a place in his feelings. He had arranged a particularly nice breakfast to tempt Emmeline's sickly appetite, and to display to Bridget the amount of civilisation attained in the colonial culinary department, and no meal at all was so Paddy-like a substitute, that no wonder he was mortified. He had just sufficient self-control left to prevent his giving the last prick of pain to Bridget, who was already almost crying. He managed to say—

'I am very sorry, dear, that you should be so treated the first morning; it's a poor welcome, but one you will get accustomed to.'

Taking even this to herself, her handkerchief started to her eyes, and she rushed up stairs to hide her vexation in Emmeline's bosom, leaving Mr.

Evelyn angrily striding up and down the room, and vociferating—

‘I have borne it as patiently as any man! Believing the promise that the scourge would be removed, when we had taken our turn at it, I bore my part with energy; but when a man sees that faith isn’t kept with him, why, he—’

‘You are not going to turn Leaguist, George?’ asked Mr. Herbert, entering the room and guessing the subject of his brother’s oration.

‘Not I! I turned anti-convictist long ago, and shall not take a more opposing ground, until—’

‘No untils!’ cried Uncle Herbert, shaking his forefinger half playfully, ‘remember, I’m a minister of the Crown.’

‘Ay, ay, and of *another* crown that I fear I’ve not much to do with. You are beyond me *there*, Herbert, said Uncle Ev, as, restored to good-humour, he placed his chair to the table, which at last showed signs of a coming repast.

‘Remonstrant, but not revolutionist, is my title.’

‘And mine too, though on different foundations,’ replied Uncle Herbert.

The afternoon was far advanced when Mr. Evelyn unlocked Nancy’s door, to see in what stage of recovery and repentance her long sleep had left her. She had not been heard to move, but Mr. Evelyn attributed her silence more to fear

than to continued intoxication, and hoped that reasonably protracted suspense might be a wholesome discipline to her. He imagined her sitting most forlorn, and ready with flippant sorrow against he should appear to inquire into her conduct; but the draught which rushed on him, as he pushed open the door, extinguished at once his imaginings, and suggested a picture of Nancy under different circumstances, or rather suggested the thought that he was likely to find no picture at all; a glance round the room confirmed the latter suggestion.

She had bolted through the window!

A constable was immediately put on track for her; but when the evening closed in she had not been found.

## CHAPTER XVII.

A WALK ABOUT HOBARTON AND A TALK ABOUT  
THE TASMANIANS.

‘ THERE, Miss Bridget, how does your name look in print ?’ exclaimed Uncle Ev, throwing down the ‘ Courier’ before his niece, that she might see herself mentioned as one of the arrivals by the last vessel. ‘ Now then no more retirement for you ; make ready for the thousand and one visitors ever prone to avail themselves of glowing advertisements of prettily-named young ladies.’

‘ Oh ! I am longing to see the first people that come. Lionel made such fun of the folks in this colony. I can’t fancy they will all be as nice as *you*. The Hills, who came home, said the men could only talk about cattle, so much so, that the bishop once preached on that text, “ Whose talk is of bullocks.” ’

‘ You shall make your own observations, Bridget, before you hear my opinion. There ! it strikes me

that alarming rat-tat is from my good friend Dr. Lamb, so you have not long to delay your judgment; a propos of doctors out here, if they differ from the home faculty in no other respect, they do in treatment of their patients' nerves, inuring them to shocks by the free use of the knocker.'

'Dr. and Mrs. Lamb and the Rev. Mr. Walkden,' announced Pridham.

'Right glad to see you back—Oh! but he isn't here, though. I was expecting to see Mr. Herbert. How do, Evelyn? not the less glad to see you. Your niece, I suppose? How do, welcome to Hobarton. Miss Evelyn! now don't move, I insist now—dear, dear I am sorry to see *you* back.'

All this was uttered before Mr. Evelyn could attempt an introduction, so that formality was spared; a warm shake of the hand having already taken place between Bridget and the company. Uncle Herbert entered, and caused a second round of congratulations, condolences, and down-sitting, which over, Dr. Lamb turned to Bridget—

'How is the duke?'

'Which duke?'

'That noble fellow's namesake,' and Dr. Lamb pointed to Mount Wellington.

Bridget looked confused. She did not know he had been ill. Uncle Herbert came to the rescue. 'He is failing they say. I have the latest news

in "The Times" of the day we sailed. The paper is at your service.'

'There has been a fresco found in the Exeter Cathedral I hear?' said Mr. Walkden to Bridget.

Fresco! she knew nothing about it. Exeter was so far from London too. 'I beg your pardon?' she answered inquiringly.

'I hear there has been a great excitement in consequence of a fresco recently discovered in the Exeter Cathedral,' repeated Mr. Walkden.

Uncle Ev looked deliciously wicked, and watched for her reply; but his brother, more compassionate, relieved Bridget by entering on the subject with Mr. Walkden.

'How do you like what you have seen of this country, Miss D'Urban?' asked Dr. Lamb.

'Very much; but I do not think I shall like being here, everything is so different from home.'

Mrs. Lamb, who was sitting by Emmeline, here bent eagerly forward. Mr. Evelyn seemed in a fidget, and Emmeline manœuvred to send her cousin an admonitory glance. Had not Dr. Lamb good-naturedly turned the subject, there is no knowing what offence Rattle might have given.

'I suppose you have come out to take pity on some forlorn mortal, Miss D'Urban?' he asked.

'Oh, yes, my cousin wished to have me, and I was equally pleased to go with her.'

Uncle Ev beamed radiant towards Emmeline,

and Mr. Herbert smiled quietly to himself, as Dr. Lamb answered—

‘ Indeed ! but I can’t say much for the forlornness of *that* case.’

Bridget perceived the laugh was against her in some way ; so she joined in it with one of her merry laughs which gained her more esteem from the party than if she had been learned over frescoes or an able reporter of the duke’s health.

‘ Oh, Mr. Walkden, isn’t it wicked of them to make me laugh at myself?’ she exclaimed, seeing that he alone preserved a steady countenance.

That gentleman thought no person could be wicked who called a laugh on Miss D’Urban’s face ; but of course he did not say so. Clergymen do not pay compliments.

‘ I like them amazingly,’ cried Bridget, as the door closed on the visitors ; ‘ and as for that Dr. Lamb, I’m in love with him. There is an un-English frankness about him, whilst there is no want of English politeness.’

‘ Unfortunately he is not forlorn enough for you !’ said Uncle Ev, half shutting his teasing eyes at her.

‘ Oh ! I hate forlorn folks ; I like happy ones. Dr. Lamb, for instance ; there is just the bright twinkle in his eye that makes one glad to look at.’

She stopped, and blushing, buried her face in her hands. Then jumping up she said—

‘How stupid! of course he meant that—as if nobody can come here without wanting to be married!’

She stamped playful indignation.

‘The few must suffer for the many; but no person who knows my sunbeam will suppose it strayed so far for such a purpose,’ replied Uncle Herbert, smoothing the glossy plaits of her hair.

‘Well Bridgy, I’m glad you approve of Dr. Lamb, he is physician general to this house; and next week he commences with Em, eh, Herbert?’

Mr. Herbert only answered by a look at Emmeline.

‘As you please, papa,’ she responded, as much with her sweet smile as by word.

‘Mamma declared *she* would never trust a child of hers to a colonial doctor,’ whispered Bridget.

‘Your mother says a great many foolish things,’ rapped from Uncle Ev, ere he was aware. On meeting his brother’s look of disapprobation, he added—‘Well, I havn’t patience with such foolery! I’d back Lamb with any living doctor. In surgery he is worthy of being called the Tasmanian Liston. He has great advantage over his English M. D. brethren, for professional etiquette allows him free practice in all branches, surgical and medical, and his appointment at the Prisoners’ Hospital affords him ample scope therein.’

‘Is he a real M. D. uncle?’ asked Emmeline.



‘ Yes, one of the few truly bearing the title. License, which I suppose we may call poetic, honours all practitioners out here with the Dr. prefix, from the proprietor of the Medical Hall, Elizabeth Street, to the senior physician in her Majesty’s service. It’s fair, too, perhaps, that the one sharing the profit, the other should share the title. But a word with you whilst I think of it, Miss D’Urban.’

Bridget was all attention.

‘ If you would avoid giving offence, you must be careful not to express too ready, unless a favourable opinion of the colony ; and be still *more* careful not to draw comparisons between the mother country and this ; and when in mixed company be *most* careful not to allude to convicts, lest there should be a convict’s son or grandson present. Up country several of the most flourishing families are of doubtful origin. There is no published code ; but I believe these, with a few others, are the accepted rules of polite society in Tasmanian, or indeed, in Australian life.’

‘ I shall accept them and be in polite life then, for I hate hurting people’s feelings, whether they are free or prisoners,’ said Bridget.

‘ It is a colonial supposition that prisoners have no feelings, and a government assumption that they ought to have none, save those known as physical.’

‘ Oh ! Uncle Ev you are joking again, now isn’t he, Uncle Herbert ? I can always believe what you say.’

‘ Not wholly, I fear. The supposition is practically expressed.’

‘ Then I shall hate to hurt them more than ever, that I shall.’

‘ I think, Bridget, I must parody the poet’s sentiment, and say to you, “ Thou hatest wisely, but too oft ;” hatred seems a favourite passion of yours. What think you, Em ?’

‘ If words alone prove it ; but there is a very paradoxical expression in those dancing eyes ; hatred loses its pungency as it drops from her lips. However, we’ve discussed the hateful subject before, have we not, Bridgy ?’

‘ Nevertheless, I love hating horrid things, and I always shall, for all the old poets or discussions in the world.’

‘ Speaking of hatred brings to my mind a fearful impersonation of that passion that I once saw in one of the Norfolk Island mutineers. I never hear hatred spoken of, but his awful form presents itself to me. You remember Macguire, George ?’ inquired Mr. Herbert.

‘ Much against my will, I do ; but how is it ? every topic turns to convictism in some shape. The cloven foot is sure to peep out from every possible corner.’

‘ Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. How should it not be so, when the evil is in our very midst, outraging our feelings, exciting our sympathies, imploring our energies, and inviting our prayers ?’

‘ There, Uncle Ev,’ exclaimed Bridget, who had been writing in her diary, ‘ I’ve made notes of your rules to send home to Mr. Lionel. You must take care how you behave, for everything goes down in this journal.’

‘ Let’s see ;’ and Mr. Evelyn took the book, added a few lines to it, and gave it back to his niece, saying, ‘ There, read that.’

Bridget read.

‘ Rule Four—Never apply the term Colonial to anything but produce. Example : Never say of a young lady—She is quite colonial ; nor of any domestic arrangement—It is so colonial. Reason : Though patriotic to a high degree, all colonists aspire to English thoughts, manners, and habits. Whilst COLONIST is a title which makes the honest settler proud, COLONIAL is an epithet obnoxious to his hardy sons, and one over which his pretty daughters pout.’

‘ Now then, Miss D’Urban, observe rule four, if you wish to keep a clear account with the natives, (don’t alarm yourself, I don’t mean aborigines). When you wish to gain a crusty matron’s heart or please a young husband, say of his wife or the

mother's daughter, "Dear me! I quite thought she was English—she is not at all colonial!" and all crustiness will crumble into the confidence—"Ah, but my daughter has not been exposed to colonial influence;" while connubial bliss, beaming thrice blessed, will simper the assurance, "My wife, though born in the colony, is *quite* English in all her notions." The lordly squatter who only an hour before boxed his son's ears for calling England his home, vaunts to the stranger who claims his hospitality—"My place is so English you'll think yourself at home when I take you round it. There, sir, isn't *that* English." The native who to-day raves against the tyranny of government in turning his beloved country into a moral pest-house, to-morrow mentions his cherished hope of laying his bones beneath British mould. Why, Charlie, there, who now glories in being a genuine gum-tree, will by-and-by fight the school-fellow that calls him colonial, won't you, Charlie, boy?

'What fun! but the colonists don't say such things amongst themselves, do they, uncle? but only when they are with what Uncle Herbert names, Anglo-Tasmanians.'

'Don't they though? Go up country with me, Miss Bridget, and hear two heads of families talk of some new family just settled near them, and you will find that "colonial" is an adjective as objection-

ably applied amongst themselves as in intercourse with us. In short, colonialism is a sort of national bogie, with which parents frighten their children into good manners, and themselves into domestic proprieties, as perpetrated in England. But you are not off yet, Herbert? You'll stay for lunch?

'I have engaged to be at the comptroller-general's office by one o'clock, and at two the governor has promised me an interview. I long to get back to my work, and am, therefore, glad of an early appointment with Sir William.'

'Had not Bridget better go with you, when you pay your formal respects to Government House? She can hardly wait for her aunt, or she'll miss the ball.'

Uncle Herbert seemed to think that would not be very much to miss.

'I shall not call there now. I met Lady Denman yesterday, and walked back with her to shake hands with Sir William. It was then that his excellency fixed to meet me to-day. By-the-by, Emmeline, Lady Denman sends her love to you. She says she will not forget your penchant for strawberries, when hers ripen. She hopes to gather her first on Christmas-day. Her ladyship was most friendly, and knowing of Clara's absence, charged me to tell you, George, to bring Bridget to see her, without the usual ceremony.'

'Nevertheless, I shall keep to the code, for fear

Mr. A. D. C., not seeing Miss D'Urban's name, should forget the existence of such a person, and that would disappoint me as much as herself. I am quite impatient to see how she looks in the smart gown I know she has somewhere stowed away for this very ball, eh! Bridget, confess?

'Be quiet, knowing everything, you Uncle Ev! Well, I do own to such a dress—and a beauty it is too; far better than any I should have had at home; indeed, all my things are prettier than any I ever had before.'

'Maternal forethought!' ejaculated Uncle Ev.

'Yes; I suppose mamma thought I should be vexed not to look nice amongst strangers,' answered Bridget, not remarking her uncle's queer smile as he turned to Emmeline, who shook her head at him.

'Do you deny by that shake of your head, Miss Evelyn, that maternal forethought is a very bright thought?' And his smile was still more queer, whereon Emmeline pouted her lips into a beseeching form, as much as to say, 'Now, don't, there's a dear.'

'We will not argue the point, then; but this I affirm, that if the end of this maternal forethought be realised as the object of it deserves, it need be very brilliant indeed. Do you agree, ladies?'

Emmeline nodded approval.

'Oh, you needn't ask me,' laughed Bridget,

‘ If Em agrees, I do. Whatever she signs to must be right. Get her signature, and you are sure of mine without my ever reading the petition : I’m a *bonâ fide* petitioner in that respect.’

‘ Most fortunate ! Your agreeance will be a necessary item in the end proposed. Now, Miss Fivewits, shall you be ready after lunch to pay your *devoirs* to the lady governess of the island, by writing your name in her vice-majesty’s book ? Having performed that ceremony, I don’t know that we will not dispense with the further etiquette of *not* seeing her, and according to her own suggestion, find our way to her drawing-room. If you are a loyal subject, you will be in love with her ; she is so like the queen, put her in a state-carriage, and drive her in Windsor Park, and she’d be our sovereign forthwith. I don’t remember, though, whether her majesty is shortsighted ? Lady Denman is supremely so, for which interesting defect the opticians of Van Diemen’s Land owe her a special debt of gratitude. Ah, yes ! that’s well recollected ; you must have an eye-glass, my dear, out of politeness to Lady Denman. Good society has adopted one since her ladyship’s sight failed her.’

‘ Good society ! Wouldn’t mamma laugh ! She says society here cannot be worth much, because no one would leave England, unless obliged to.’

‘ Miss D’Urban, for instance. But your mother

has made many mistakes in regard to this place. The present is only one of a whole chapter of blunders which she and a hundred other idle folk are content to remain in rather than trouble themselves to bring their opinion to the test of facts. My sister has made no greater error than that which you have just repeated.'

'Now, surely, Uncle Ev, you are not going to make out that society here is as good as it is at home?'

'That depends. When the Lady Geraldine Manners comes out, she may feel at a loss for a companion; or the Duchess of Sutherland might return for want of an equal; but Mrs. D'Urbans and Mrs. Caldridges may come without end; they will meet their equals, and very often their superiors in everyday society here. Place Hobarton by any town at home; canvass the inhabitants of each, and compare results; then see if we cannot fairly establish a claim for equality. In the English town, rolling by in their father's equipage, the daughters of a well-fee'd physician head the élite, and make the surgeon's daughter jealous. Here the young wife of a government officer presides over the mysteries of the government clique, while the banker's family shines pole-star to professional fashion. We must not include the military in either census, for they are the same everywhere, adding to the gaiety, if not to the glory, of a town.



Here, though, the 99th has been so long settled, that it has married down into parental soberness, and so become bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, that we shall feel it when they are ordered elsewhere. In the English town the wife of a retired naval captain leads the decorums of the religious world, and stands placard pillar to all solemnities. *Here* the bishop's wife as ably, and far more appropriately, officiates for the piously inclined.'

'I think you are very hard on poor mamma, uncle.'

'I haven't patience with such idleness in persons who have had relations in the Australias for years; to sit still in contented ignorance of the state of their friends (ignorance which they would be ashamed to acknowledge of a foreign country) is unpardonable, I think.'

'But, uncle, it is not only mamma who says such things. The Hills spoke against Tasmania, and the two Mr. Joneses, who came back just before we left England, spread an evil report. They said it was a horrid place, and that the people were rich and rough, caring for no one but themselves, and unable to appreciate quiet worth.'

'Well, well, I suppose we must plead guilty to the charge of the Messrs. Jones. We *were* unable to appreciate them according to the high standard of appreciation they set upon themselves. They, with hundreds of discarded claimants for British

patronage, abjured their native land, thinking they had only to fix their colonial locality, and Cæsar's message to the Roman senate would be their motto. They arrived, and were disappointed. They found that the refuse of the professional roll, or the plucked candidates for academic honours, were not more acceptable here than at home. They learned the wholesome, though distasteful lesson, that Tasmania wants not such men as they, but earnest, intelligent men, who forswear England, not because they are too stupid to advance there, but because others have entered and won the field before them. The shipment of bad goods to the colony is a practical joke that Britain—legal, commercial, and parental—is very fond of playing. But ours is a case of Jones *versus* Tasmanian society in its generally accepted sense, and not of Jones *versus* colonial immigration. But I expect Miss Bridget regrets having brought forward those worthy gentlemen.'

'Oh, dear no! I enjoy your lectures, Uncle Ev, when you don't get fierce.'

Uncle Ev put up his eyebrows, but somehow he could not manage to look formidable or wolfish, so he let them down again, and asked Bridget if he should continue his lecture, as it still wanted three parts of an hour to lunch. Bridget said she would permit him to continue on one consideration, that he would allow he had as much pleasure in giving

it as she and Em in listening to it. Uncle Ev was not sufficiently sure of this ; therefore he would not allow any such a weakness on his part. Bridget therefore excused him, declaring she felt pleasure enough to atone for all his shortcomings ; but she begged him to be serious, for she really wished to know more of the habits of the people with whom she might live out her days, and when he spoke in fun she never understood him. However, Uncle Ev did not need a caution ; he was sober enough for his sober subject, and sounding his usual ahem, commenced by saying—

‘ Society in the mother-country is a name given to a class claiming precedence of other communities, and arrogating to itself the power of electing or refusing members, according to its established rules. It has certain privileges which it dispenses under the strict superintendence of its trustees, Fashion and Rank. Society in the child-country has, with a little difference, the same definition ; but the difference, being only of circumstance, does not involve disparity. Society in the old country has the frost of age and the gray of experience upon it, and is consequently calm in its politeness, calculating in its preferences, and so exclusive as to be almost unwilling to admit additional members, though they prove themselves worthy of admittance by its own severe tests. Society here has the bloom of fresh-blown youth upon it, and is

sprightly, generous, frank, and ever ready to welcome new comers who can stand the trial of its less critical, though not less strict formula. The faults of society here are the faults of youth; but to me they are more easy to bear than the prejudices of age. Specimens of the genus Jones, who think to impose on it by thrusting themselves, unIntroduced and uninvited, on its attention, meet with a repulse as warm and demonstrative, as they would cold and punctilious, were they to propose a similar liberty with society at home. Persons bringing to the colony neither introduction nor recommendation in mind, body, or estate, may remain as long without the pale of Tasmanian society as they would beyond the recognition of English society; but let them come with letters from mutual friends, and they will be admitted with hospitable courtesy into the private circle. Let them come pleading *auld lang syne*, and they will be received openhearted; or let them claim the stranger's sympathy, or wayfarer's privilege, and the right of fellowship will be nobly extended; and if they be not ushered into the presence termed, *par excellence*, 'Society,' they will be warmed at the hearth of the inner shrine, and be cheered on their way by the kindly greeting of their host, and by the gentle ministrations of his family.

'The grand mistake made in England is that persons may come out here to *be* anything or *do*

anything without loss of caste. There's poor Kingsby; you remember him?' (turning to Emmeline.) 'He read pleasant fictions of colonial indifference to position; and having been persuaded that here he might employ himself in any manner without disparagement to his position, he brought out his wife and family, and opened a grocer's shop. He was disappointed. "Friend, go down lower," was very plainly intimated to him when himself and Mrs. Kingsby proceeded to write their names at Government House. Calls abundant were made on him, but at his shop, and not at his private door. His wife—as lady-like a woman as I have met with—told me, with tears in her eyes, that she was willing to bend to her altered circumstances, but found it difficult to meet the butcher's and confectioner's wives on terms of equality. The chemist's and ironmonger's wives considered it a condescension to call upon her.'

'What has become of Mr. Kingsby, uncle?' asked Emmeline.

'Oh, poor fellow, he found that folk who cannot keep grocers' shops at home cannot keep them out here. He did not understand business, and failed. He could not resume his profession, having at first appeared on the stage as a tradesman. He tried many trades, but succeeded in none. I secured him a situation in the convict department; but he could not make the two ends meet. He got into

debt, and, with the hope of bettering his prospects, re-emigrated. The last I heard of him was that he lay a-dying, broken in spirits and health, whilst his wife plied out her life with the needle. It would be well if a few of these deterring cases were published side by side with the brilliant accounts that entice so many to leave well for worse.'

'Now, then, Miss D'Urban, I think the fear of another such lecture will keep you from inveighing against us again.'

'No, indeed. I haven't heard half enough. I want to be wide awake to people, and I vote you continue your lecture till lunch really comes. I hear knives rattling down stairs, so it will be here presently.'

'That is after the fashion of the child who said tea must be coming because he heard the burnt toast being scraped; eh, Bridget? As to continuing my address: I have only now to give you a caution on the application of what you have heard. You must be careful to apply my remarks to society as a *whole*, and not to individuals or families. I challenge the visitor only to a comparison of the number and eligibility of persons to exchange with him the cards, civilities, parties, and socialities of polite life. I only assert that he has no right to complain of the want of companionable society. That the government officers, professional

men, many of the merchants and landed proprietors, with their wives, are a class as worthy of the technicality, "polite society," as any similar class at home, is all I seek to maintain. When the visitor reminds me that all these have children, I cannot take him within the domestic veil, and bid him continue his comparison with England, where no baneful convict influence undermines infantile principle, or hardens the young heart into callous indifference to crime and its debasing consequences. Our drawing-rooms may vie with the luxuries of a British home; but whilst we are subject to such disturbances as those you witnessed on your arrival, the sanctuary of our inner life cannot compare with English comforts. The visitor who admires his smiling hostess, sees her not when she merges into the distracted housewife, finding one of her servants has absconded to save the penalty of an expensive breakage, and the other lying drunk along the kitchen floor. When that gentleman in his turn becomes the host, he knows not that his lively guest will leave him to become the despairing mother, for during her absence her babe has been drugged with opium by her convict nurse, and it is doubtful whether it will ever awake from its profound sleep. The traveller notes with kindly pleasure the exultant air with which a handsome mother exhibits her offspring; but he hears not her after sigh when she discovers her little ones

playing over a disgusting drama that convict actors have rehearsed before them.'

'Oh! now, Uncle Ev, I'm sure you are taking barrister's privilege, and making a great deal out of nothing.'

'You doubt me? What do you think of that rogue, Master Charles? His favourite game is trying to simulate intoxication. After that affair with Nancy, I caught him going it over in the nursery. Pridham was acting Nancy; and there was *he* roaring it away in imitation of me. When I told him to stop he seemed quite aggrieved, and begged me to wait, 'cause the constable was coming in a minute, and then 'twould be such fun.'

Mr. Evelyn here walked abruptly from his niece—a courtesy that generally concluded all convict discourses.

'Well, I think Uncle Ev is a very funny man: he won't let me speak against the place, and yet he rails unsparingly at it,' said Bridget, proceeding to clear the table for Pridham, who brought in the lunch-tray.

'No, no, Bridgy; he rails neither at place nor people: he only deplores, as every one must, the system which makes the latter unhappy, and the former an unsuitable abode for children.'

'Well, I think it is very wicked to hate the poor convicts. They can't help being here: they must go where they are sent.'



‘No right-minded person does hate them.’

‘You and Uncle Herbert, I know, don’t; but I’m sure Uncle Ev does: he even gets angry when he talks about them.’

‘You mistake, dear. No one is more truly kind and forbearing with them, whilst kindness and forbearance are of any use. He may hate, to use your pet word, the body of sin which the prisoners represent, but not the individual convict.’

‘I think he is very hard upon them. He does not trust them as I’m sure Uncle Herbert would.’

‘Papa is Christ’s minister, and avoids having more to do with them in every-day life than he can help; but when necessary he is as strict with them as Uncle Ev, and can assume as much severity.’

‘Ah! I’ve caught you; for all that you won’t allow me to speak against dear old Uncle Ev. *Assumes!* yes, it may be that with your angel of a father; but severity is pretty real with Uncle Ev when he rates the convicts.’

‘When it is *real*, Bridgy, it is always deserved; but his anger is more often put on than felt. Then, of course, between his and papa’s manner there is the difference of character, and—’

She stopped. Her cousin perceived it was for some other cause than to sip her beef tea.

‘Let’s hear the rest of the “and,” Em darling. You had better, now, for I half guess it.’

Em smiled, and shook her head.

‘And, besides, papa is a Christian. That’s what you were going to say.’

Em shook her head, and replied—

‘So is Uncle Ev.’

‘Papa is a servant of God, then?’

‘So I hope is Uncle Ev.’

‘Then I don’t know; and unless you tell me, I shall put some awful “and,” such as—’

‘Hush, hush, Bridget; don’t joke. I was only thinking that, perhaps, papa seeks special grace from God to enable him to manage his prisoners, and to subdue all angry feelings in dealing with them.’

‘Well, I wish Uncle Ev would seek some too, for really I’m tired already. I haven’t been here a week, and there have been no end of rows. Besides, it’s so horrid to see people always wretched; it makes one feel almost wicked when one laughs. I don’t wonder now that such a sad look has fixed into Uncle Herbert’s face. There, again, Miss Em; explain why, if Uncle Ev cares as much for the prisoners as your papa, he has not got the same sorrowful countenance instead of that round merry one, so full of fun, that it makes one laugh to look at it—when he doesn’t grow savage at convicts, that is.’

She was delighted that she had at last puzzled Emmeline; but Miss Evelyn only waited until she became more serious to answer.

‘It is easily explained, Bridget. Papa yearns over them as immortal beings, who may be saved whilst this life lasts, but who must be eternally lost if, when death comes, they have not turned to God through their Saviour. So he watches each moment of their passing lives as though they were all dying men, and as though each moment increased the mighty work to be accomplished before their death. When hope is over, and one poor soul has fled, papa turns soul-sick away; but his work is not done: he must watch on; he has hundreds more to care for. No one could keep so perpetual a watch without showing it in his countenance.’

‘Poor dear Uncle Herbert! I’m sure heaven would be full if he could save sinners.’

‘What does Abraham say to Dives, Bridget? One who suffered more than ever we may know—one who now watches for the prodigal’s return—*can* save, and is longing to save sinners, and yet heaven is not full! Salvation is God’s to give, but man’s to accept. Papa may take the precious offer to them, but he cannot make them accept it.’

‘Don’t let us talk any more about it, it’s so dreadful to think of people being lost, especially poor convicts, who haven’t even happiness in this world.’

Emmeline’s serene eyes looked out on the lawn. Bridget’s were abstractedly set on the table as she took her lunch: her brow was clouded over by

some dark thought, that, passing over her spirit, excluded its radiance from shining through to give her countenance its wonted sunniness.

‘Uncle is coming in, Bridget. I see him by that hedge of roses. Don’t resume the convict subject: it always distresses him now.’

‘Why *now* more than before?’

‘I do not refer to a very present *now*; it commenced years ago, when he married, believing that transportation would cease. Before that time he gave himself wholly to the work of reforming prisoners for his share of the burden.’

‘It is that which seems so odd to me; from being so kind, to turn against them all of a sudden.’

‘I wish I could disentangle that notion from your mind. Uncle Ev has *not* turned against them. I doubt whether he was ever what *you* would call kind to them. In those days of which I speak he was as strict and uncompromising as he is now. Before you charge him with undue severity, see and hear other owners!’

But Bridget still appeared to have her own thoughts on the subject. She nodded as though she would say, ‘There is something wrong somewhere.’

‘Come now, Bridget, I won’t have you get out of love with dear good Uncle Ev.’

‘Out of love with him! No, indeed; his affec-

tion for you will always prevent that, to say nothing of my own particular regard for him. All I am out of love with is the *rows*. Answer me one more question, and then I won't tease you further. Do you know I am quite ashamed of being such a goose to have come all this way to be puzzled with news of my native land. So before I meet other visitors I want to learn all I can.'

She knelt down, and, resting her elbows on the sofa, looked up to Emmeline in her old English fashion.

'Tell me, before Uncle Ev comes in, why he expects transportation to this colony to cease; and if it isn't rather selfish to wish to turn over to another country that which he considers so great an evil to this.' .

'You must seek information from a better source: you can hardly read a newspaper without meeting with a reply.'

• 'Oh! I hate newspapers; one has to read so much to find out ever so little. *You* can tell me why Uncle Ev always is so angry when he talks of convicts or transportation.'

'He is only one of a thousand who feel that it is time to relieve this beautiful country of a burden that it has quietly borne, and over which it would never have murmured had it been removed at the time promised by government.'

‘But that’s just what seems so unfair to me. After you’ve got all the good you can out of the convicts, to want to send them away directly they are of no more use. On shipboard I used to hear the captain talk of all the buildings, roads, and works they had done for the colony: from what he said, Tasmania owes to them her present position. Now, haven’t you been the gainer by them for all that you cry out on transportation?’

‘The benefit has been mutual. England gave us convicts to do our work, and we gave England’s convicts work to do, and land-room in which to do it. Hush, here he is.’

Uncle Ev’s quick step in the verandah, and he entered, beaming and bright as the day itself.

‘What do you think of this for a fine December day? rather too warm for wool, isn’t it? Our Midsummer Christmases are charmingly defiant of Thomson’s “Seasons,” are they not? And yet it’s very odd; for all the evidences of the five senses you can’t get folks to divest themselves of the mother-country’s poetic associations. I suppose they won’t, until the British blood becomes too infinitesimal for even homœopathic discovery.’

Bridget jumped up, and soon forgot the convict turmoil in the beauties of a large nosegay of roses, which Uncle Ev had thrown towards her.

‘Now then, peer about for your gowns,’ said

Mr. Evelyn, as he shut the garden-gate and offered Bridget his arm to escort her to Government House.

‘Oh, Charlie, Charlie! come, quick, look at that funny man. It’s a juggler, isn’t it, uncle?’

Charlie came running back to see the funny man, but he looked about in vain, until his cousin pointed to a man dressed in a piebald suit of yellow and blue.

‘Oh, you stupid! he’s a prisoner: couldn’t you see that in a minute? I s’pose he’s a ’sconder, because the constable’s got a big gun to shoot him if he isn’t good. Ah! ah! ah! what a stupid, Bridget, not to know a prisoner when he’s got chains on his feet and hands.’

This little fact had escaped her notice, the grotesque dress and leathern cap having absorbed her attention. As the man passed by, the Broad Arrow on his back showed itself—symbolic alike of Government’s claim on the body, and the Evil One’s claim on the soul of the poor sinner. Bridget felt half frightened, and clung to her uncle’s arm as the man raised his head and gave her a sullen, side glance.

‘Run on, Charlie boy, and find out something better than that to show your cousin.’

Off ran the child, nothing doubting of his father’s convict inclinations.

‘Oh! I’ll show her a lot presently.’

And, true to his word, on turning into the next street he exclaimed—

‘There’s a whole gang of them—every one is prisoners.’

He pointed to a party of men, chained and similarly dressed to the piebald they had just passed. Some of the men were working in the road, others drawing carts of stones, and others, more heavily ironed, were assisting their mates by various lesser services.

‘Don’t fear, Bridget,’ whispered Uncle Ev, feeling her arm tremble; ‘just follow me whilst I lift the child over this quagmire.’

She picked her path across the broken ground, hardly venturing to turn her head, lest the men should think she was staring at them; but no reciprocal delicacy possessed the gang, for they, one and all, rested on their spades to gaze at her, and two nearer to her than the others nudged each other, and then the nearest approached quickly yet stealthily, and muttered something which she could not understand, but she fancied it sounded like—‘Give us a fig.’ She hastened forward in spite of the mud; the gang dropped back demurely to their work, for the overseer came round.

Mr. Evelyn laughed as Bridget caught hold of his arm.

‘Oh, uncle! they spoke to me:’ she was too alarmed to say more.



‘Well, they do not seem to have hurt you very much. What did they want of you? something very innocent, I’ll dare answer.’

‘I couldn’t make out what they said; it sounded like “a fig” something.’

‘They thought your greenness betokened figs, or, in plain language, tobacco. “A fig of baccy?” is the humble form of request; it is left to the donor’s generosity to understand it more munificently. But do you know that you might get those men punished for speaking to you, if you were mischievously inclined? Had the overseer heard them, a few days of solitary would have been the consequence; it’s astonishing what the poor fellows will risk for tobacco. Here we are at Government House; allow me to introduce you to the abode of vice-royalty.’

Bridget laughed as the lowly wooden building presented itself to receive her homage.

‘What a queen-like residence.’

‘It’s a pretty cottage; but as the allotted dwelling of his excellency a scandal to Tasmania—a scandal that is kept in company by the handsome pension of twelve pounds a year wherewith government rewards Buckley for his valuable services to Australia. However, Government House is more comfortable within than stately without.’

The call of ceremony being over, and Lady Denman not being at home to receive their friendly

visit, Mr. Evelyn proposed a stroll through the principal streets.

‘Do you perceive how the habits and arrangements of London are followed in public life here? The street-cries are perpetuated. The cabmen are so determined to carry out the usages of their fraternity that they even imitate their metropolitan brethren in a strike for higher fares. See that rank of cabs: there is no heavy country driver asleep on his box whilst the passenger gets into his neighbour’s cab; all is animation and show of arms, as each one asserts his peculiar readiness to “take you in” in more ways than one. A wink would bring half a dozen babblers to your side.

‘The incongruous medley of shops, rich and poor together, is London-like. Butcher, baker, grocer, all appear to have served their apprenticeship in the capital, the cut of the meat, the shape of the bread, the adulteration of the groceries, are in dutiful or unintended remembrance of cockney education.’

‘Are all the tradespeople of London origin that it should be so, uncle?’

‘By no means. Trades from every part of Britain have settled here. Every county has its representative, every provincial custom its follower. Every grade and every phase of English life meet out here. It is probably this very amalgamation that reproduces the English metropolis.

Were each county to send forth a body sufficient to exist independently, that body might establish itself into an exclusive colony; in habits, provincialities, and dialect the counterpart of its parent. But as each district doles out its living gratuities to the colonial fund in ones and twos at a time, the result is a commingling of numbers into a family, who, having higher interests at stake than the cherishing of local identities, consent to forego, if not to forget their home peculiarities, or only to reserve them where they add to the public good. Babel-like confusion would ensue from this general condensation were it not that man, individually or collectively, will have a *leader*, how much soever he affects to despise being led. "Nay, but we will have a king to reign over us," is the universal principle of the human heart. Unaware to himself, a master-spirit works his way upward; and, unaware to itself, the community yields to him,—adopting his habits, thinking his thoughts, and seeing with his eyes. The Londoner has evidently been that spirit out here, as he will be elsewhere, until persons are undeceived of that notion, that the words "From London" on a country sign-board denote superior goods or able workmen.

'To the same cause may be attributed the freedom from peculiarity in the tone and pronunciation of the natives. As children they have no oppor-

tunity to contract the nasal twang or gutturals of any particular province ; by the constant change of servants, and from an intercourse with a diversity of accents, they are preserved from fixing on any one peculiarity. The Irish brogue heard to-day is to-morrow changed for the broad Scotch accent ; the Devonshire drawl is soon forgotten in the London affectation ; the Somersetshire z's are lost in the Yorkshire oo's. If you have not already remarked it, you cannot fail shortly to note how very well the common children speak, even where the parents set them no good pronounciative example.'

A party of children passed by, and as their speech was in bold defiance of Mr. Evelyn's assertion, Bridget looked up rather quizzically at her uncle, who said—

'Of course I do not refer to fresh importations ; they have to unlearn home acquirements : I allude to the genuine born or bred Tasmanian. As yet the Australian colonies have given but few contributions to their mother-tongue ; doubtless in time they will compile an appendix descriptive of their habits and modes of life. Already the characteristics of a new race begin to develop, and in another generation they will arrange themselves into distinct features. Well, what do you think of Hobarton ? This is about the best part of the city. Look at these houses ; they certainly want the substantiality of English buildings ; but as to

appearance, what could excel them? In some streets relics of the infant aspirations of the first settlers are still to be seen in the form of ground-floor cottages and make-do dwellings; but these only serve to demonstrate the fact that we have put away childish things. The architectural fault *now* seems to partake of that which is incident to youth. The houses uprear themselves with a speed that suggests instability; and too often a draughty door or shrunken skirting-board intimates that next time the timber might, with advantage, be better seasoned. Whether from the elasticity imparted by the climate, or from the builder's hurry to have a roof of his own over his head, it is certain that structures are raised from foundation to garret with an amazing rapidity. Here a house is planned, built, and inhabited before a similar one at home has passed from the mason's hands.'

But Bridget was tired, and did not appear to care about timber, seasoned or unseasoned. In answer to her repressed yawn, Mr. Evelyn said—

'Come then, let us home; to-morrow we will explore Newtown; its beautiful villas and tasteful gardens will repay research, and atone for the dulness of to-day's expedition.'

'Oh, uncle, I'm only too surprised to express pleasure; I had no idea there would be such beautiful places here. And as to the shops—people wouldn't make so great a to-do about out-

fits if they could take a peep at them. That one, now, is almost as splendid as a Regent Street shop.'

'Almost, indeed! Every species of domestic need, comfort, and luxury, is amply furnished by the enterprising tradesmen, who at once make others comfortable and themselves rich. In *there* is a fellow making his fortune. He will spread a supper or dinner with any London cook. He is our Gunter; come in and test him, by way of refreshing yourself; an ice—or at any rate, *ice*—is as seasonable here in December as it is at home. An ice-house on Mount Wellington keeps Webb as popular through the torrid weather, as his entertainments do through the winter. Literary supplies alone are inefficient; and yet I mustn't say that—small as they are, they meet the present demand. Doubtless, when literary yearnings increase, the means of satisfying them will also increase. A year or two ago, Longfellow's poems were not procurable in the colony; nobody knew that such a poet had ever lived. *Now* "Evangeline" has become a household deity, and everyone has learnt that life is real—life is earnest. A few years since, parents were obliged to wait for the eligibility of a certain prisoner, of whose superior education they had heard, if they wanted a tutor or governess for their children. *Now* there is Bishopstowe for the boys; girls, I think with my wife, are still badly off for good schools.'

As they entered the garden gate, Charlie, who had run on in advance, came bounding back, panting with news he was eager to impart.

‘She’s found! she’s found! They had such fun to catch her. Bradley says she fought like a tiger; she’s bit his hand drefful. Won’t she get a pretty sentence, that’s all!’

‘Charlie, Charlie, who have you been talking to? you forget papa’s orders,’ cried Mr. Evelyn.

‘Nobody; only Pridham was waiting to tell us. Bradley did stop here to get a drink of water, and Nancy did nearly get away again—nasty beast!’

Pridham came forward, and the child continued—

‘Here she is—such fun! Come and tell all about it.’

‘Go back, Pridham; I will thank you to remember my commands, and not give Master Charles information of this kind. You will get into trouble if you’re not more careful,’ said her master.

The hint was sufficient. The air of importance vanished more quickly from Pridham’s face than her person disappeared behind the kitchen-door. Whilst Mr. Evelyn spoke to her, Charlie drew close to Bridget, and winking a sly childish wink, he whispered—

‘She gave Nancy something to eat, but mustn’t let papa know; and Bradley got a drink of beer, really—not water—hush-sh—he’ll hear.’

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## AUNT EVELYN AND FAMILY MATTERS.

BRIDGET rejoiced in the prospect of Mrs. Evelyn's return. Curiosity alone did not prompt her joy. She longed to see what sort of an aunt she possessed under that title; but she longed still more to resign the honours of housekeeping. With girlish delight she had entered on those honours; her delight, however, soon changed into discomfort, when she found that more was expected of her as mistress than to jingle her keys, to weigh out the servants' rations, and to order dinner. Dinner-hour nearly trespassed on tea-hour, before the united muddlings of herself and Robert produced the desired effect in turning raw mutton into harico, and an untrussed fowl into a roast. After such a forenoon's muddle, it was with almost maternal pride that she watched the serving-up of the viands; and many persons will know how mortified even to tears she must have been when an unwitting blow from Uncle Ev struck down



her pride. Shutting his eyes towards the dish at the bottom of the table, he asked—

‘What, in the name of wonder, could be that smokey hodge-podge keeping his tough, underdone joint in company?’

Emmeline saw the pain he was inflicting, but on her sofa she was too distant to stop further mischief. Pointing to the pease, Uncle Ev said—

‘There, Miss D’Urban, you see the hated badge, even in the face of nature, is doomed to twit us. She made those pease green, but art perpetuates in them the “colonial everbrown.”’

Before Bridget had been a fortnight in office, she determined that her aunt must be a being of mighty intellect and power, if she managed to call even tolerable order from chaos so decided that, like the Egyptian darkness, it might be felt.

Mr. Evelyn hired a man to supply one of the vacancies left by Nancy and her bacchanalian colleague. Robert Sanders had just become eligible as he applied at the barracks for an able servant. He knew it would be useless to inquire for one who could be recommended as a cook; such men being generally reserved for Government service, or pre-appropriated to families in whom the superintendent had private or politic interest. The list of ‘eligibles’ was not very startling. A man, willing-minded and sharp, was

all Mr. Evelyn expected from it. Such an one appeared Robert Sanders. The brief dialogue which took place prefatory to his engagement, will attest his willingness.

‘Your name?’ asks Mr. Evelyn.

‘Robert Sanders, or anything your honour pleases.’

‘Your trade?’

‘Hostler—but I ain’t partial; I can give a h’ist to aught that’s wanted.’

‘Do you think you can cook?’

His eyes glistened; he was fond of cookery if not of cooking. Catching hold of his cropped hair, he says—

‘Well, I b’lives I’ll handle the wittels as well as most on ’em as don’t know nothin’ about it. Any ways, I’m willin’ for it.’

‘Your crime is burglary?’

‘Es sure, that’s what they calls it; can’t say I didn’t lift the swag when Sam Tomkins got in and pulled open the door; darned good her did me, though!’

‘What is your religion?’

‘I ain’t partial; don’t know as I’ve choice that way; whatever your honour’s a mind to ’ll suit me. If your honour hires me out, you won’t find me stick to trifles in nothin’.’

His eagerness to be engaged was so great, that there is no knowing where it would have hurried

him; his willingness became alarming, and Mr. Evelyn hastened to put a stop to it by bidding him pack up his bundle, and follow him; on which Sanders gave a great gulp of satisfaction, and smothered his roots with his fingers, as though administering salve to his closely-cropped head.

When Uncle Ev presented this new curiosity to Bridget, he told her he hoped she would get him into train against her aunt returned. She stood aghast; not observing the sly twinkle in his eye, she thought he really meant what he said. Turning to Robert, he said—

‘Your mistress is from home, Sanders; you will therefore do this young lady’s commands for the present.’

Then to Bridget—

‘Remember; if Sanders is refractory, I am always at hand.’

‘Very good, sir,’ responded the man. ‘I b’an’t much of a hand with the leddies, seeing I’ve been brought up to hosses; but I knows what *come* means, and I knows what *go* means; so the young leddy ’ll find me willin’, darned if she won’t.’

‘Well, well, let it be so; and I hope we shall not have to trouble Government much about you, except for the muster report.’

‘Very good, sir; I’m willin’ as any feller goin’.’

‘Give him something to eat, Bridget,’ (in a lower tone) ‘I’d rather *you* should than Pridham,

or he may overeat himself the first time;' (then aloud) 'there is plenty of cold meat; carve him some, for he missed his dinner at Tench.'

So she cut a plate of mutton, which, with a hunch of bread, and the remains of a gooseberry pudding, she set before him. How his eyes did expand as he sat down! To Bridget's horror, he mixed meat, pudding, and bread into one mess, and then commenced to eat it with the iron table-spoon, only giving himself breath to ejaculate 'bootiful!' 'rare!' between the huge mouthfuls. When he had finished, he pushed the dish from him, and exclaimed, 'Thank'ee miss;' then starting back in his chair, he arose with a suddenness that overwhelmed table, its contents, and all the fire-irons.

'Oh, dear! that wern't a lucky hit. Go up, yer ginger,' cried Robert. 'Never mind, I bain't hurt, miss;' broken crockery was of no consequence at all.

With this man began Bridget's domestic trials. She refrained from worrying Enneline with her many tales of distress; but every now and then even her elastic spirit would be overstretched, and confide in her cousin she must. Had Robert's powers been equal to his willingness, he would have done well, and Bridget's task would have been less irksome. We do not insinuate that he was what is emphatically called *deficient*, either

in mind or body, but he needed a certain power of discernment in the daily proprieties of life. For instance, when his young mistress found him wiping the dinner plates with a used-up pocket-handkerchief, he took her remonstrance as directed against the use of his *own* property on his master's china, and replied—

‘Never fear, miss, it's too bastely for aught else; I've quite used 'em up. What if I hadn't? I ain't one to set store on my things, beyont fetchin' 'em out when they's wanted. I'm willin' to do my best for the master.’

No argument could persuade him that *disgust*, and not dislike to incur an obligation, caused the young lady's protest against the blue kerchief. The ‘never fears’ were repeated with increased willingness, with an addition that made Bridget shudder when ever after she thought of dish-clouts.

Another time, when the meat should have been on the spit, she found not the *sirloin*, but Robert roasting before the fire. His trousers were tucked above his knees, and he was chafing his stockingless feet, his legs luxuriously expanded to the two chimney ends.

‘Robert, what will Mr. Evelyn say if dinner is late again?’

‘All right, miss, was just a thinking if 'tweren't time to handle the wittels; a pretty bit of eatin' in

that jint. I'll be after 'en when I've got a bit of the torment out of these darned legs.'

In one item of domestic service, however, he was particularly expert, and particularly delighted. In the boot and shoe department he was at home, there fondly dreaming the leathern array before him into so many horses awaiting professional attendance. He could not have too many pairs to clean, and the muddier they were the better was he pleased. At the sight of a boot or shoe, down would drop the basting-spoon or saucepan, and off would rush Robert to the prize; and it was no matter who should attend to the cookery so long as he seized the opportunity of flourishing away over an imaginary steed, now admonishing it with a 'Y'up there!' 'Ho here!' 'Still, you beggar!' as the shoe might slip from his hand; then consoling both himself and it with the prolonged sis-s-s peculiar to his trade.

Miss D'Urban's troubles also arose from her own ignorance of household matters; a thousand times she wished that a little instruction from Mrs. Rundle had taken turns with a lesson from Monsieur de Tiptoe, and a hint or two from the housemaid had alternated with the musicmaster's raps. She then might have committed fewer of those blunders which, when they were harmless, were as good as nuts to Uncle Ev. One of these blunders left so painful a recollection behind it,

that she quite dreaded the appearance of a certain dish on the table, lest it should call forth a sly allusion to the unfortunate affair that had passed into the bye-word, 'Bridget's geese.' With other charges she had received thirteen geese, the special pets of Mrs. Evelyn. The steady bipeds did not require much of her time; when she had given them a feed of oatmeal, turned them out into the paddock, and then again housed them for the night, that was all she had to do for them. This she faithfully performed; every evening the punctual creatures hissed for admittance, and every evening they were admitted; and all went on well. But as summer advanced the heat proportionately increased, and, to the signal discomfiture of grazing animals, the herbage proportionately decreased; consequently the thirteen found but small nibbling work in the paddock. Yet it never occurred to Bridget to deal out a larger or second ration. She observed that the grass had withered, but with that observation she connected no supposition of hunger on the part of the geese. One day the whole flock stoutly refused to be shown into the field, and when Bridget insisted with joint power of mouth, hands, and apron, the thirteen put their necks together in consultation, and then, with a deafening clatter, they mounted and flew into a neighbouring paddock. Driven thence the poor things came back, and disconsolately wandered about their own do-

main for the rest of the afternoon. Day after day this scene was repeated, still Bridget never suspected the cause, and the only light Robert could cast on their erratic propensities was, 'He didn't know nothin' about *geese*, seein' he was brought up to hosses, but he sposed 'twas cos their wings wasn't clipped.'

Uncle Ev was up country to bring home his wife and baby, so he could not solve the daily migration. Uncle Herbert no one ever dreamed of troubling with domestic perplexities, and out of love, Bridget rarely disturbed Emmeline with them. Glowing were the accounts Bridget wrote to her aunt; she begged not to be accused of vanity in telling how very fond the dear geese had become of her; indeed, they never caught a glimpse of her without cackling *such* a welcome, and it was quite ridiculous to see how they all rushed to meet her, and twicked her dress with delight. Mrs. Evelyn should judge for herself; and true enough, when that lady returned and went into the paddock to view the miracle, the thirteen flew open-winged towards her niece, and set up so outrageous, so eventful a greeting, that two dropped down dead at her feet.

'Starved to death!' cried Mrs. Evelyn, examining the feathered skeleton. 'Those rogues have stolen the food from the poor things.'



‘Oh no, dear aunt, I assure you I fed them myself every morning.’

‘And no more?’ cried Aunt Ev still more shrilly.

‘No; I thought they grazed.’

‘Yes, when they have the opportunity,’ replied Uncle Ev, who, unobserved, had followed them to see the prodigy of affection. Two more victims perished; the other nine recovered under the happier auspices of Mrs. Evelyn’s tendance.

Aunt was exactly the opposite to all Bridget had pictured her. She was a native and had the fair skin, slender figure, and long limbs of the Tasmanian, with the not less characteristic, but more painful colonial feature—prematurely decayed and broken teeth. *Now* thirty guineas refill a mouth with as ornamental, if not as useful, a set as that provided by nature. *Then* Mrs. Evelyn had to bear tooth-ache and tooth *want*, until some years later, when an American dentist settled in Hobart, affording the inhabitants a chance of transferring their gold from their pockets to their mouths. It was from this clever artist that she gained, not only her *third* teeth, but her first thoughts of the millenium. He was wont to alleviate the pain it was his profession to inflict by holding sweet talk on that blissful subject. ‘Do you believe in the millenium?’ he whispered to her, as faint from the

extraction of three long roots she leaned back to yield a fourth to the cruel instrument. She nodded assent with a silent hope that there might either be no teeth or no dentists in the period so called. Others, to whom he put the same question, shook their heads either at *it* or at his mode of exhibiting it; whilst one gentleman, less refined or more tortured, was heard to roar, ‘Hang the millenium, sir! what has it to do with my tooth or your forceps?’

Mr. Evelyn had always declared that he would neither marry a colonial, nor a woman younger than himself; but men are quite as apt as the other sex to mistake their minds on subjects matrimonial. For all that, Clara M‘Rock was a colonial, and not nineteen: for all that, he felt so safe in her society, because he was so old and she such a child to him: for all that, she walked, talked, laughed, and rode with him without compunction, because he was old enough to be her father—one day the gossip went round that positively Mr. Evelyn’s declaration was about to split on the Rock Clara. And he did not deny it; but strove hard to prove that, though a native, Miss M‘Rock could not be fairly considered *Colonial*, she having been educated in England from her twelfth year, a fact over which the lady herself was most scrupulously careful, lest it should be forgotten when the ornamental reminders of such an education lost themselves in the homely duties of

married life. Whilst quick to resent charges brought by strangers against the colony, she felt herself privileged by her English training to animadvert all that in public or private life could be termed colonial. When her first little girl was born into the world she became eloquent on the subject of female education, inveighing against the manner in which girls were brought up, and the limited means afforded for teaching them the way they should go; whereas boys were well provided with schools and tutors.

‘Schools!’ she would ask, ‘where are they? there is plenty of puffing and advertising, but there is not that one in the place to which I would send a daughter of mine. Every dissenting minister’s widow or unfortunate speculator’s wife, opens a school, *fitness* for the post being the least consideration. Every one recommends a pet teacher, but then superiority in *need*, and not in ability, dictates the recommendation.’

Towards such private governesses as were then attainable she was equally hostile, and determined that no child of hers should ever be instructed by a colonial governess; and when Mr. Evelyn remarked, ‘Give me a daughter dutiful and affectionate, and I will not ask her many questions in geology,’ she replied that he would have to refrain from much more simple subjects if he did not send the youthful Clara to England, or engage a lady

whose mind did not run on marriage in connection with her visit to the Antipodes.

It was at the age of twenty that Mrs. Evelyn entered on the duty of mother to a little girl, who, after four years, resigned in death her place in her parent's affection to Master Charles, the bouncing rogue of the present volume. To him succeeded another girl, whose acquaintance Bridget has just made, and who, as she lies crowing in her cot in answer to her papa's whistle, numbers seven months to her brief existence; but brief as her existence is, it has not escaped the evils incident to convict proximity. There is no such happy fortune for even the youngest who dwells within sound of prison bells. From the hoary grandsire to the latest addition to his race, all must feel the effects of a system which strikes immediately at the root of that tree called olive. Then why should exemption be urged for Baby Evelyn, the tiniest off-shoot of the tree? If parental fondness did plead it, it was not granted; for she was scarcely five months old, ere a perilous mischance befel her as follows:—

Betsy, the nurse, had been so steady for eleven months that one Sunday her master thought he might venture to send her out alone to give the babe its usual airing. Mrs. Evelyn was unable to accompany her, and the air was too balmy and health-giving to be missed even for once. So

Betsy was despatched with strict injunctions to return by noon. Proud of this first proof of a confidence for which she had long waited, she set out determining to obey the command and be punctually home by twelve o'clock. Had temptation under any form than that through which she had previously fallen presented itself, she might have stood morally safe; but on that fatal morning the snare was irresistibly spread. The old temptation produced old longings.

She had not proceeded far before she encountered a shipmate, whose shabby attire was a certain indication that she had not kept out of trouble for long together. An exchange of questions, and comparison of lucks ensued, and ended in an opinion on the stranger's side, that one who had lived in so good a situation, had such smart clothes,\* and well grown hair, could not fail to have a few spare coppers in her pocket. Such coppers evidently had not vanished in spreeing, or Betsy must have been in cage (short for Cascades), and as they must be somewhere, there was no place more likely than her own person. This train of reasoning the stranger pursued in silence for some time; she then startled Betsy with the inquiry—

\* The dress of the better description of convict cannot fail to attract the attention of strangers, who, not knowing the peculiar significance attached to 'clothes' may censure the master or mistress for permitting so unseemly a display on the persons of their servants. The finery is a signboard of convict respectability—i.e. freedom from trouble.

‘Will you sport an odd copper to old times?’

Betsy replied that she had taken the pledge, and hadn’t tasted ‘a drop of nothing’ since she’d been out, and hoped she never should again.

But her companion said a glass out here wasn’t like at home, ’twas more genteel; the best—what hadn’t known trouble—wouldn’t be ashamed of a glass of wine; the best lady in the land would be in trouble if there was harm in that sort of liquor.

Still Betsy refused.

‘Well, then,’ cried her tempter, ‘it shan’t be said that two mates met and wouldn’t be friendly to past times and luck to come. I’ll go and sell this bonnet off my head to fetch a sip between us, though it isn’t the perlite thing to do, as them what’s most respectable generally treats the other.’

Betsy’s pride and convict vanity were touched, and she said she would willingly stand the treat so long as she was not pressed to drink. The friend agreed—not caring who should go without, provided she did not—and conducted Betsy to a house of the worst description, where, looking upon the wine whilst it was red, Betsy’s moral courage succumbed, the cup was taken, the liquor tasted, and further power of resistance gone. Other shipmates came pouring in; the time passed merrily, and when Betsy rose up to go, she promised to return on the following Sunday. She

reached the Lodge only just as the clock struck twelve, the master's anger, therefore, was averted. He noticed her flushed cheeks, but accepted the explanation that she had taken the *wrong road*, and her dread of not being home by the appointed hour had 'flustered her a bit.'

Next Sunday she was again sent out, and it was deemed safe to let Charlie accompany her. During the week she had, in imagination, gone through former scenes of dissipation until her mind became inflamed, and bent on once more giving itself to those unhallowed pleasures which had caused the crime she was now atoning. She promised Charlie all manner of sweetmeats if he was a *good* boy; a peculiar meaning attached itself to this condition, and he was as good a boy as she could desire—seeing all, but repeating nothing. She was again careful to be back before the family's suspicions were aroused. The third Sunday arrived, and brought the same permission; she who had been so steady would surely not disappoint them the third time. Baby alone was confided to her care. On Mr. and Mrs. Evelyn's return from church, no baby was to be found; however, Betsy might still be home before dinner, they only felt a little uneasy. Dinner was over and uneasiness increased into alarm. From watching at the windows and looking down the road, the parents proceeded to active measures. Tea hour

passed, and alarm increased to anguish. Mrs. Evelyn now remained in the house, in case the infant should be brought in famishing for maternal care. Her friends, Dr. and Mrs. Lamb, who had hitherto been assisting in the search, sat with her, while Mr. Evelyn, accompanied by a constable, went off in one direction, and a band of his friends in another.

Charlie was neglected in the general commotion ; his existence was only remembered when he came in, cross and hungry, to ask where ‘tea had gone to.’ But crossness and hunger were both forgotten when he saw his ‘own beautiful mamma’ in tears. He sat quietly down, and slipped his hand into hers, until, on the point of crying himself, he slid over to Dr. Lamb, and whispered, ‘Who’s made her cry? nasty people, I’ll shoot them.’

Dr. Lamb whispered in return, ‘Naughty Betsy hasn’t come back, so mamma is afraid poor little sister is lost.’

With an appreciating nod, Charlie reseated himself.

An English child would have commenced calling up ‘Children in the Wood’ stories as applicable to the present case; not so this young colonist. He lapsed into a thoughtful but not mysterious mood, as though he knew as well as any one what sort of being lost this was; and how to get back baby was more the doubtful point than what had



become of her. The dreary silence was at last broken by his very demure voice.

‘If I could have a constable, p'r'aps I'd find her. I'd know it by the large pussy cat on the wall.’

His voice became confidential.

‘Only don't tell Betsy, she wouldn't give me any more lollies, and the bogie will fetch me away when it's dark.’

The result of an eager interrogation was a conviction that if only Charlie's description of ‘down a nasty street, and up a nasty place,’ could be defined, the lost one might be found in the Sunday rendezvous.

‘Should you know the house if you saw it, my boy?’ asked Dr. Lamb, determined to scour the length and breadth of Hobarton.

‘Oh, yes! I'll peep into every door till I see the pussy, then there'll be plenty of prisoners, and fun, and baby lying down inside the other room.’

A cab was hired. Dr. Lamb's simple direction to the driver was, ‘Take us to the worst place in Hobarton, then set us down and slowly follow.’

Without a comment the man drove them to —— street, turned down —— street, and then silently opening the door, he gave Dr. Lamb a wink which said, ‘here or nowhere.’

Charlie was quite alive and proud of his mission. He peered into cottage after cottage, until he

arrived at the fifteenth, whose door alone was shut.

‘Stupid!’ cried Charlie; ‘if ’twas open I think I’d see pussy, and then I’d know.’

Dr. Lamb rapped and entered.

‘There’s pussy!’ cried Charlie, clapping his hands.

‘Now then, my boy, jump into the cab and wait for us, you mustn’t go in with the bad people.’

Happily, the scene of vice which met Dr. Lamb’s sight is hidden from us. We need not follow him, as pushing his way into an inner room, he discovered the object of his search, lying asleep. From the heavy sob which disturbed the babe, it was evident that the slumber had succeeded a fit of unsoothed crying. The tears still rested on its little cheek, and as Dr. Lamb stood over it, it burst out afresh into a piteous wail, unable even in sleep to forget its wrong.

Perceiving that Betsy was not in a state to attempt escape, he hurried off with his tender burden, merely telling the woman of the house that if Betsy was not forthcoming when the constable arrived, she would stand a chance of being taken in her stead.

Relieved of her weight of domestic anxiety, Bridget again became Emmeline’s chief attendant, and the happy unclouded maiden of English days. And as under the genial influence of summer, her

cousin appeared to regain a degree of strength, and a respite from suffering, her happiness increased to merriment, and her uncloudedness into positive sunshine; and save when convict disturbances broke on the family peace, or she heard of prison miseries from Uncle Herbert, or they came under her notice in the form of chain gangs, recaptured absconders, or the prison van conveying a load of females to 'The Anson,' the flow of her joyous spirit rarely met with obstructions, for all in the house were too well pleased to have so unfailing a spring of gladness in their midst to stay one ripple of its refreshing course. This lightness of heart was a source of satisfaction to Aunt Evelyn, who gloried in stores of all kinds. Her storeroom was her particular pride; it had never yet been found deficient in yielding its weekly rations in what amount soever demanded. In Bridget she discovered a supply of good temper and vivacity likely to be as unceasing as her own bags of crushed sugar and kegs of Port Philip beef. She prized and respected her niece accordingly. Setting a utilitarian value on those qualities which made her the life of the party, she calculated that from Bridget's repository could be furnished ample assistance in household and other cares, together with a sufficient quantity of *fun* to keep the family in that pleasant article through all vicissitudes of temper.

The children loved Bridget for a not more laud-

able reason. Her appearance in the nursery was a signal for crow-and-caper dance to baby, whose little legs and arms set vigorously to work in anticipation of the treat.

Charlie valued her more in proportion to the races she ran with him than by proportion of the hugs she inflicted on him. After a chase round the garden she would be 'the best Bridget in the world,' while she would be 'such a great stupid Bridget for kissing a big boy.'

Uncle Herbert experienced unconscious relaxation in his niece's society. To Emmeline he turned as to a second self, confiding to her yearning sympathies the tales of disappointment, sorrow, and sin, which each day's visit to the Penitentiary too surely afforded. Her sweet and gentle smile encouraged him, her hands clasped with his in commending to a Father's care some widely wandering prodigal, her faith aspired with his, until the flame would glow, more fervent, and spiritually comforted, he again went forth to the same round of ministerial toil. This communion, therefore, was not relaxation, it was a preparation for renewed warfare. His daughter's smile but bade him forward, her prayer but regirded him for conflict, her faith but promised ultimate success; his mental energies still needed rest and an object on which to passively recruit. This object Emmeline no longer could be; her father's eye in resting on her

conveyed a swift and poignant message to his soul, which stirred his jaded energies to a response full fraught with the sad surmise that through all imputed improvements she might yet be fading from his view. Emmeline felt this, and she knew that neither her cheerful countenance nor unobtrusive attentions could divest him of his misgivings. His smile was reciprocal and his eye grateful as he acknowledged her affection ; but she perceived that anxiety was in the smile and pained inquiry in the eye. It was a mutual understanding, therefore, that when Mr. Herbert returned overcome by his depressing duties, too weary to seek Emmeline as a friend, listener, or sympathiser, she should merely meet him with the wonted caress, and then, retiring to her sofa, leave the spontaneous music of Bridget's voice to soothe the worn-out mind into repose.

You must not imagine that he was given to spend his evenings in an easy chair—an evening so spent was exceptional. When his prescribed government duties were over, he still employed himself in different ways on the prisoners' behalf—now writing to the Home Government to expose some abuse, then to the Comptroller to pray for the mitigation of an unusually severe sentence. Now he would write to the English friends of a convict lying under sentence of death in the condemned cells, and who had, perhaps, that day begged him to break the dire intelligence to a fond

mother or a pining wife. Then he would reply to a letter from some prisoner's relative at home, asking him to seek out such or such an one, supposed to be either dead or lost. Or else an annoying correspondence with the heads of the department would occupy his time. Such correspondence was necessarily frequent while low officials were permitted to lay before interested secular powers charges of neglect or *excess* of duty on the part of the chaplain, and while such secular powers (of no very high standing) took on themselves the exercise of episcopal authority over him, seeming to delight in circumscribing his prerogative to the smallest possible bounds, and in making him feel himself as much under their control as was any overseer or constable.

The Bishop of Tasmania nominally reckons the convict chaplains among his clergy. They are expected to show themselves at the visitations and at public meetings convened for special clerical considerations; but here ceases the benefit of relationship to their diocesan, not from unwillingness on his lordship's part to admit them to closer intimacy and to the full privileges of their order, but from inability to redress their grievances without an appeal to the local government, a step his lordship is naturally averse to, because it cannot fail to cause unpleasantness between himself (as the head of spiritual authority) and the colonial representative

of supreme temporal authority. Therefore, of all undefined positionists, the convict chaplain is the most unfortunate if he be not 'in with the Comptroller' or the Superintendent of his station.

One would think that all parts of a moral machinery formed for the noble purpose of human reformation should work in unison. And does it not? asks the mere looker on, who has been admitted to inspect its able construction and varied movements. He is filled with admiration at the wondrous adaptation of each part to its peculiar end, and eulogises the grand renovator, opining that some obstinate resistance or organic incapacity to receive improvement must exist in the object worked upon if the anticipated aim be missed. He expatiates on the exquisite order in which wheel rotates within wheel, but not having heard, he cannot be shocked by the grating of each as it turns upon its axis, for discord sets the primary wheel in motion, and its jarring is felt through the whole machine. Nor when he imputes to the object worked upon a heart hardened beyond relenting, a mind too set upon evil to be shaken by even the concentrated force of this wonderful machine, is he aware that the force is *rarely concentrated* the separate portions of the system being too divided among themselves to join their strength to the long pull, the strong pull, and the pull altogether; while on that section immediately intended to act on the

criminal's heart so heavy a clog is placed that its solitary endeavours are comparatively useless. The stranger knows not of these things. But to speak plainly—Is it not strange that one of the most important coadjutors in the reformatory work—one whose position is the most laborious, whose task the most depressing, should have opposition from every official quarter instead of the assistance and sympathy he expects?—and *that*, too, where his adherence to the penal regulations is so nicely strict that not the most overbearing Superintendent can charge him with irregularity, or the most vigilant favourite spy out a fault. Private annoyances of the most petty kind are contrived to draw him into a quarrel.

If the Chaplain be a man who would go down with the Department stream, not caring into what depths of servitude it might drift him, nor into what abuse of duty it might hurry him—if he be content with the *name* of first-class officer, and suffer himself to be treated as an inferior—if he *see* all, hear all, *do* all and say nothing—and chiefly, if he be not over godly nor too demonstrative in his life, then will he be a man after the Superintendent's own heart—then and not till then, will he find but few drawbacks to embitter his professional career, even though he be a gentleman by birth and education, even though he be unfortunately guilty of an M.A. to his name.

If you could transport yourself to a penal settle-



ment and there dwell for six months in the clergyman's quarters—you would perceive that Mr. Herbert did not exaggerate these strange matters. You would perceive that the convict chaplain, if he be what he should be (*not else of course*), has unthought-of vexations, which in print would sound mere frivolities, and would be regarded as such by him, were they of fortuitous origin. But when he knows that these vexations are not occasional accidents, but occurrences planned by pique and worked out by paltry jealousies and official resentments, he learns to regard them as a warning of concealed animosity, and they assume a power (destructive to his peace) to which adventitious misfortune could never pretend.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## BEING NOTHING PARTICULAR.

It is now eighteen months since the arrival of the transport and passenger vessel. Of the living freight of the former we have lost sight, but anon we may hear of it again when occasion leads us to Restdown Ferry, and thence on board H.M.S. 'Anson.'

Meanwhile visiting the Lodge we find the family there going on just as we left them—Mr. Evelyn, according to colonial usage, taking the breaking in and keeping in order department—Mr. Herbert still devoted to the prisoners—Mrs. Evelyn alive and housewifely as ever—Emmeline varying from better to worse, from worse to better, but always patient and cheerful—Bridget acting the affectionate, untiring nurse, learning that even the shadowy side of life has pleasures for those who are not forced into it by indigence or crime. Though no better reconciled to the species of kitchen row peculiar to the colony, she is decidedly more pleased with the colony itself. She has been invited to the numerous parties and pic-nics for which the pleasure-

loving Tasmanians are famed, but she has refused them all except the Government ball (to which she not only received a formal invitation through the Aide-de-Camp, but a friendly one from Lady Denman) and a scramble to the summit of Mount Wellington. Emmeline has greater attractions for her than all the young officers of the 99th, or a chance of being lost in the bush.

That eighteen months should witness no change in the servants' quarters is not to be expected. We find that Sanders no longer polishes imaginary horses in the form of boots and shoes, but, promoted to the stable, wields a veritable currycomb over living horse-flesh. His willingness has not diminished, though now his kitchen probation is over he does not mind acknowledging it was the hardest pull of his life to get through them things that he hadn't been brought up to; but this no one ever guessed, his cheerful 'Very good, ma'am'—'all right, sir,' having continued to the last. The poor man was in such dread of losing his place that he concealed his feelings. Pridham has been dismissed. She fell so violently in love with Sanders that trouble was foreboded, and the only mode of dealing with her was to send her away. Mr. Evelyn asked Robert if he would like a recommendation to marry her, but shaking his head sideways, Bob said that 'unless his honour was partial to it he'd rather *not*, he'd all so soon bide with his hosses as

marry a gal he hadn't much mind to'—he supposes when he has his ticket there will be no difficulty in getting a wife to his mind, but there might be some difficulty in laying hold 'on such a pair of hosses as them again.' In Pridham's place another servant has been hired from the Anson. She is called Lucy, and has made an odd impression on Uncle Ev, by having positively shed tears on her leaving the hulk.

'Why, Lucy, most prisoners are delighted to get into service—be grateful to the gentleman,' commanded one of the officers.

'I'm not crying for to go, but for she to go too,' replied Lucy, choking down her sorrow, and throwing a farewell peep at a tall figure that watched her from behind a grated door.

A ring at the Lodge will convince the most incredulous that the present Lucy is the little Grenlow of the transport. She is budding into womanhood, but still retains her childish face—she drops a quick curtsey and blushes furiously as she thinks her prison clothes attract other notice than her own—she gives a beseeching look that seems to say, 'Please not to stare at me.' She has put her hair down to its utmost length over her cheeks, but every now and then a disobliging lock, whose ends can rarely reach her ear, falls forward, increasing her confusion and blushes; she hurries it back, and, hoping no one has observed it, curtseys herself out of sight.

## CHAPTER XX.

H.M.S. ANSON.

‘WELL, Bridget, I must go to the ‘Anson’ this afternoon. I have been to the watch-house, and there found our lady ; she will have three months. As we feared, she made her way to the ‘Labour in Vain,’ instead of to the orphan school. I have refused to appear on her behalf, believing that the punishment will do her good, this being the third offence. Now don’t look so vexed ; steel that tender heart of yours, or you will never do for out here. You may go with me. Are you a clever physiognomist ?’

‘Pretty well ; but I shall not have much choice on which to exercise my talents, shall I, uncle ?’

‘Every bad lot has its best.’

‘Well, I should like to explore the ‘Anson.’ I suppose it is one of the colonial sights.’

‘Ay, ay ; I thought so. It’s very dreadful, but I must just see it. That’s the way with woman-kind. At half-past two, then, the cab will be at the door. Very tiresome to have to change

servants whilst your aunt's away.' (Mrs. Evelyn had gone up the country to pay her annual visit.) 'We always happen to pick up some beauty during her absence.'

'There's poor little Lucy peeping in, uncle; come in.'

Half anxious and half frightened Lucy entered.

'If you please—mem—sir—is it true that Janet isn't coming back?'

'Yes, Lucy; how did you hear the news?'

'The constable, sir, promised her to call, and told me—and, and—sir—and—'

'And what, Lucy? Speak out, if you please.'

'And to beg you'd please to keep the place for her 'gainst she's out of trouble. She knows 'taint a every day house, sir, as all the rest of us does, sir.'

'There will be time enough to think of that by-and-by. Let this be a warning to you, Lucy: you will find me a kind master if you deserve kindness, but—'

Here Lucy burst into tears, exclaiming between her sobs—

'Oh, sir, if you please, sir—you don't think I'd go for to drink the filthy stuff—indeed, sir, I wouldn't, nor nothing else.'

'Well, well, we shall see, Lucy. I did not mean to vex you; you ought to have learnt by this time that, in this colony, we suspect all

persons until they have proved themselves beyond suspicion. I tell you plainly, Lucy, that you have lately appeared more friendly with Janet than I approve of.'

'O, sir! sir!' said the girl, almost choked with tears; 'I were afraid of her, indeed I were, sir; and it's lovely to think she's gone! I'd a sight rather do all the work myself than have her back.'

'Take care, take care, foolish girl; how do you explain all that anxiety to have Janet's place reserved for her, eh, Lucy? Do not attempt to deceive me.'

'It's easy explained, sir.' Lucy drew nearer to Mr. Evelyn, and glancing around the room to assure herself that she was not overlooked by malignant eyes, she continued in a low tone—

'You see, sir, I were obliged to give you Janet's message; and p'raps, if you see her in factory, you'll be so kind as to tell her I spoke for her, sir.'

'Why, Lucy, what is all this about? I will thank you to be straightforward.'

Lucy drew still nearer.

'When Janet got leave to go out, she says to me, sir, "Now, if I gets into trouble, which is as like as not, I'll send and let you know; and if you don't speak a word to the master for me, I'll give you a keepsake, you little sneaking hussy;" and she put her fist to my face, and says, "Mind that:

I'll find you out by some of my mates." You may think I were frightened, master.'

Mr. Evelyn giving a long ahem, turned to his nieces,—'In this our good-tempered Janet, we have harboured a respectable reptile;' then to Lucy, 'Did she ever ill-treat you, that you fear her?' A second timid search about the room—

'Yes, sir; you remember that black eye I got? She gaved it to me; and because I wouldn't promise to tell a lie about it, she went and broke a lot of soup-plates, to make believe that I'd tripped in carrying the tray, and so got the bruise; and as she managed to get first word with missus, I weren't asked no questions; and I were very glad, because she swore she'd pay me double if I told true. She made fine fool to you, sir, and missus, for heeding her lies: she said you was a sweet, peaceable babby, not to know more about fighting than to believe I got my black eye by a fall.'

'Enough, Lucy Grenlow; you were very wrong to let me keep that woman, when you saw such wrong doings.'

'Oh! please, sir,' sobbed Lucy, 'you don't know how dreadful 'tis down stairs when they hates a body; and they always hates a body that's better than theirselves. I've well nigh cried my eyes out sometimes when I've seen things as shouldn't be in a respectable kitchen; but what were I to do



when Janet swore she'd make a hell for me if I peached.'

'It is over now; I can excuse you: but, another time, remember your duty to your master; the innocent have nothing to fear. I never encourage one prisoner to tell tales against another; but where matters are visibly wrong, the case is altered. Now that will do, Lucy; for your comfort, I will tell you that at present we have all a fair opinion of you.'

Lucy looked her thanks, and dropped a profound curtsy.

'Have you any charge to make against Janet?'

'I don't believe, sir, that she'd ever a child to the orphan school. 'Twas only a make out to get leave sometimes; but please, sir, not tell her, or there'll be no end on the mischief she'll do me.'

Mr. Evelyn made no reply. Emmeline asked Lucy—

'Then when you looked so anxious you were afraid that your master would agree to take Janet back?'

'No, mem,' said Lucy, brightening vastly. 'I wanted to mention to the master that I'd been reckoning about Martha Grylls, and thinks if she hasn't got into trouble again, her time will be up on the "Anson;" and if you please, mem,' Lucy stopped, and colouring up to her temples, looked from Mr. Evelyn to Bridget, and from Bridget to

Emmeline—as much as to say—‘*Do* understand, without giving me the pain of speaking.’

‘I guess what you wish to say, Lucy. This Martha Grylls is a friend of yours, and you want to speak for her.’

‘Thank you, mem—Miss Evelyn.’

‘Come then, my girl, let us hear something of this Grylls: what can you say in her favour, eh, Lucy?’ said her master.

‘If you please, sir, she’s a ‘orrid temper,’ commenced Lucy.

‘Very satisfactory, nodded Mr. Evelyn.

‘Shockin’ to manage, sir.’

‘Better still—go on, Lucy.’

‘But such a noble creature, sir; and I can’t never fancy she’s a common prisoner like me. If you only please try her, sir; she was quite a mother to me coming out; the Chaplain set a sight on her, and all the women feared her like. She was so grand to ‘em, without ever meaning it.’

Mr. Evelyn gave a sly glance at Bridget.

‘We’ll think about it; where all are alike strange, and all have a character to gain, I would as soon choose one servant as another.’

‘Oh! no; if you please, sir: if you’ll excuse me, sir, there’s as much difference between they on the “Anson,” as between night and day, sir; there’s some as never scarce keeps out of the dark cells, sir; and there’s they what never gets in.’

‘Has your friend ever been in the cells, Lucy?’

‘Oh! if you please, sir; if you please, that ain’t a fair question.’ Then flushing deeply, and seeming frightened enough to cry, she apologised—

‘I didn’t mean it rude, sir; indeed I didn’t: but I’d as soon tell on myself as she, sir; I’d have broken my heart right away coming out, if it hadn’t been for she, sir.’

‘Has your friend been in the cells?’ repeated Mr. Evelyn, in a voice that implied—‘I mean to be answered.’

‘Well, then, she did three time, sir; but it weren’t no fault of hers, sir; they broked a little white mug she set a sight on; and then they called it kicking up a row, because she was a bit rom-bustious; and then they ’cused her of insolence. Martha, you see, sir, hasn’t no respect of persons (beg pardon, I forgot that were Bible); if she thinks a thing ain’t justice, she’d as soon tell a first-class officer so as one of us; and when she’s up, ’t isn’t easy to put her down.’

This harangue was delivered with so much naïveté and generous warmth, that her hearers exchanged glances of astonishment—they had not imagined little Lucy capable of showing so large an amount of feeling—her general demeanour being quiet in the extreme.

‘But, Lucy, you cannot suppose these tempers will suit me?’

‘Oh! she’ll have nothing to worry her here, sir; I’m trettet well, and that’s all she cares for now her mug’s a broked; she don’t seem to care for herself. Sure, thinks I, sometimes, Martha Grylls likes all them hard things and punishments. She goes about just as if she took a pride in them.’

‘All very fine, Lucy; but won’t do here. If I hire her, you must talk to her.’

‘I talk to Martha!!’ The very thought was profanity to Lucy.

‘But before I make any promise,’ continued Mr. Evelyn, ‘you must tell me what this great friendship of yours and Martha’s is. I do not approve of these prison attachments. Are—you—sure—Lucy, that she is not *your mother*?’

‘Lor’, no, sir!’ cried Lucy, in unfeigned surprise. ‘I wish she was, and I shouldn’t be out here. She ain’t nothing to me in flesh and blood. ’Twas all her kindness coming out that did it. I were the youngest on board, sir; and the women used to make mock on me: so, one day, Martha, who didn’t sociate with none of them, rosed up and took my part, and said, ’twas only because I was better than them that they tret me so bad; so then they hated me, but she stood for me all the voyage, and the Chaplain was very good to me, because he set a sight on her.’

‘Well, well, Lucy, go to your work now; we’ll see what can be done.’

‘If you please, sir, you won’t listen to anything they says ’gainst her? p’rhaps they’ll make her out bad.’

‘Never you mind, the officers are the best judges of her conduct; do not presume on my leniency.’

Utterly unwitting of the meaning of the two grand words—presume, leniency—Lucy imagined them the superlative to all former degrees of promise, and dropped a befitting curtsy. ‘Thank you, sir!’ She hesitated—‘Please, I don’t know if she’d be angry; but I don’t think Martha Grylls is her real name; they call her so—she lets *me* call her Maida.’

Mr. Evelyn nodded, and Lucy left the room; in a moment she peeped in again—

‘If you please, sir, if her time isn’t up, I’d gladly do all the work for a few days, if you’d wait for her?’

‘That will do, Lucy, shut the door.’

‘The little puss!’ exclaimed Bridget.

‘What do *you* think, ladies? though I was obliged to put in a full stop now and then, I rather like her the better for all this,’ said Uncle Ev, turning to his nieces.

‘Poor little creature!’ sighed Emmeline; ‘how old is she, Uncle Ev?’

‘Seventeen years; hers is a sad story—you must ask her to tell it you some day.’

‘I’m quite curious to see this Martha Grylls; I hope she’ll let us call her Maida, it is so much prettier a name than Martha—by-the-by, Uncle Ev—I vote we don’t have any dinner to-day,’ said Bridget.

‘Thank you, kindly, Miss Bridget, I’ll excuse *you*, with much pleasure; but perversity unusually prompts *me* to dine to-day; what says Emmeline?’

‘I join dear Bridget in wishing to give Lucy as little to do as may be possible, now that she has double work. Ah, Bridget! you see your thoughts can’t conceal themselves.’

‘Oh, if that’s it, let it be lunch only; you won’t object to that too, eh, Miss Bridget?’

‘Not if you are good, and will promise not to tease Lucy; I will do all I can to assist the poor girl. Now sit still, Em, I insist on your being quiet; do you think I would let these dear hands meddle with heavy blankets? I’ll manage the beds.’ Bridget gently reseated her cousin.

‘“Duty,” Miss Em, is your watchword; your duty is clear, sit still!’ With a sweet smile Emmeline sat down. A scarcely perceptible sigh escaped her as she watched her light-hearted cousin depart. When left alone, she pressed her thin fingers to her eyes, and one bright drop oozing thence coursed slowly down the transparent palm. Then looking upwards she whispered, reverently, clasping her hands—

‘ O Christ—but give me Thy grace, Thy strengthening grace to say, “Thy will be done!” then *where* and *when* Thou wilt, direct Thy chastening hand.’ As if the answer had already come, a holy calm overspread her face, and all trace of suffering was lost in an almost angelic smile that kindled from lip to eye on her wasted countenance. It was at such times as the present, that Emmeline felt with extraordinary keenness the trial which rendered her a helpless looker-on; where every energy—physical, moral, and spiritual—was needed. When in the latter and last cases, she beheld the scenes of sorrow, strife, and sin, which form an awful item in the daily routine of life in Hobarton,—scenes which are regarded by the majority of the initiated with complacent indifference, or ignored with the philosophic axiom, ‘What can’t be cured must be endured,’—she yearned to go forth another Phineas, and stand betwixt the morally dying and the dead. In her sweet humility, she thought herself laid aside in utter uselessness. But is that useless which prepares a soul for glory? The searching rays which ripened this goodly fruit for early transplantation from earth, reflecting from so willing a recipient, lost all their scathing power, and fell gently on the household with an irresistible influence. Received so meekly, betrayed so slightly, only they who had learned to trace the line of suffering beneath the

unruffled surface of Emmeline's fair brow could tell how severe the individual pangs one by one completing the process which should, ere long, leave her meet for the Master's presence. If for a moment the serenity of her features was startled into a gesture expressive of her pain, it was only that they might look more lovingly, and smile the oft-repeated assurance—'It was nothing; taking me by surprise, the spasm made me start.'

Wielding the palm of example effectually before her family, how could she be useless? She moved as a Messiah in their midst, silently, but surely beckoning the way to heaven. The most ignorant or prejudiced doubted not that to follow her steps was to tread straight on to glory.

Her religion partook of no gloomy exclusiveness nor ascetic austerity. Hers was a religion of cheerfulness and kindly sympathies; for this reason particularly attractive to Bridget, over whom her influence fell as a chain of roses, leading her an enchanted captive. Bridget's character had not changed beneath her cousin's 'reign,' as she laughingly called Emmeline's almost magnetic capability of guiding her. Each original element still existed; but by a skilful rearrangement each one blended so harmoniously with the other that its presence might well be questioned. Her character was fast becoming one lovely whole, instead of a



glittering mass of irregular brilliants. She had still the song in her heart, and the smile on her lip; but the smile was no longer one that smiled in ignorance of sorrow, and, therefore, repugnant to the heart of sorrow; it was a smile ready to shine through the gloomy chinks of grief upon the heart within, and whisper, 'We can hope for brighter days; the sun is even now behind the clouds—it will burst forth anon.'

The song was no longer that wild, jubilant gush, that awakened admiration in every breast save his, who pining in trial, felt aggrieved, almost insulted by the trilling notes of mirth. It was a rich harmonious flow, that whether it reached the ear of kindred spirits or of bruised hearts, could never fall amiss; no shrinking sensitiveness could be wounded by its inaptness, nor bereavement be mocked by its ungenial gaiety. It was a song listening to which, sorrow forgot her wail, and apathy consented to be pleased.

It is a grand mistake to suppose that identity is lost in submitting to the renovating influences of time, circumstance, or religion.

Bridget D'Urban, the laughter-loving, mope-hating girl, will be Bridget D'Urban, the laughter-lover, mope-hater to the end of her days, unless some mighty unforeseen calamity arise and quench her spirit's light. It would be as impossible for her to

mope in the important responsibilities and interests of life, as in the trivial enjoyments of her youth.

‘Because I preside over responsibilities, need I look solemn? They are solemn enough in themselves. Why not enliven them with smiles?’ she would ask, when moody Mentors, fain to repress her manner of treating difficulties, lectured on her levity. She still hated the shadowy side of life, but she no longer shunned it; she would cross over to the weary beings, dragging out their life in its darkened corners, and smile her smile, and sing her song to them—or if needs be, mix her tears with theirs—but still she was Bridget D’Urban.

As if in silent prayer, Emmeline remained some time without altering her position. She then arose, and feebly moved to the window to tend her pet geraniums. A merry laugh reached her ear. Looking towards the garden, she perceived Bridget trying to shake a large drugget; but each useless attempt only sent a cloud of dust into Lucy’s eyes. At last, flinging down the unmanageable cloth, Bridget threw herself upon the grass, claiming the young servant’s commiseration by a comic pout of distress, followed by a hearty peal of laughter, in which Lucy half timidly joined.

Catching a glimpse of her cousin’s figure between the well-filled flower-stand, in an instant Bridget was up over the verandah-steps, and in through the window.

‘ Oh ! such fun, Em ; that horrid drugget—poor Lucy—but let me see how I look ?’

Suiting her action to her words, Bridget danced over to the glass and complacently surveyed herself. Her ringlets were put back and twisted round her plait. On the top of her head was perched one of Lucy’s neat little caps. Her dress was pinned up, and over it she wore a housemaid’s stomacher apron.

‘ Don’t I make a capital housemaid ? Do you think I should get twelve pounds wages, out here—eh, Em ?’

‘ Forthwith, if you would take them out in kisses,’ said Em, fondly laying her cheek on Bridget’s. What a contrast did those faces present !

‘ But dear, you have learnt that uncouth “ *Out here,*” do not say it, there’s a good one.’

‘ Have I ? then it is quite unconsciously. I hate to hear it ; it sounds as though we were out-lawed in some dreadful, outlandish place. Better call Tasmania “ out here ” at once. But Em, I want to consult you. There is but a mere picking on the mutton-bone. Shall we have some chops for uncle ?’

‘ No, Bridget, dear ; Uncle Ev will not object to a vegetable lunch—poor little Lucy has enough to do.’

‘ Oh ! I’ll cook them.’

‘ Ah, Rattle ! I thought it was more of what you call fun that you wanted ; but your presence will only disconcert Lucy.’

‘ How you *do* find out what is likely to vex people ; you must have been a regular Pickle in your time to have found out such secrets,’ said Bridget, whirling out of the room.

She discovered Lucy standing in amazed disgust over a tub drawn from beneath Janet’s bed.

‘ The—beast ! and the master’s too !’ she slowly articulated, as Bridget approached.

No bandicoot or wombat had harboured in the tub as Miss D’Urban at first suspected. But a more anomalous medley met her sight. In a foul pool of putrid soap-suds, lay dish-cloths, pocket-handkerchiefs, floor-cloths, collars, dusters, some of Mr. Evelyn’s socks, two shirts, and one of Charlie’s pelisses ; all rotting together in the corrupt, mud-coloured fluid. The articles of clothing had been given Janet to wash at the period of Mrs. Evelyn’s departure from home, and had been huddled by her, with some of her own things, into this ‘ respectable,’ as Lucy called it, until a convenient season, which, in Van Diemen’s Land kitchen parlance, signifies a season of partial soberness.

‘ The beast !’ repeated Lucy, emphatically ; ‘ there’s I hunted high and low for master Charlie’s pelise, and I heard the master my own self row the laundress for losing of his shirts and socks, and

says Janet—"Oh, these washers are a 'orrid careless set when missus ain't home to look after their things;" then says she, looking pitiful-like, "'Tisn't to be s'posed poor Miss Evelyn could poke after house matters, and Miss D'Urban, she don't like them things," and she goes and locks her bed-room door, and says, "Master won't relish the smell of the gutter; pah," says she, "aint it bad, Lucy?" and so I said, "Yes, it's been dreadful long past, Janet; we shall get fever if master don't mind it;" "Lor, mercy," says she, "fever or not, I don't want no workery rumpussing out here."

'Don't be disheartened, Lucy; you'll mend matters before your friend arrives,' said Bridget, soothingly, as the poor girl surveyed the unpleasant task she must accomplish ere she could continue her tidying operations. The kitchen was in a state of exquisite disorder preparatory to a grand reformation.

At the mention of her friend, little Lucy jumped to her work, and speedily became a very opossum of activity, leaping about from one branch of labour to another, while Bridget proceeded to lay the cloth for luncheon. By keeping the mutton-bone in countenance with a nice salad, some English cheese, and a few sweetmeats, a repast was set to which Uncle Ev deigned to give a nod of approbation.

'Was that nod for me or the lunch, Uncle Ev?' asked Bridget, silyly.

‘To an unexpected guest, Bridget. I didn’t anticipate seeing the *bone* to-day, at any rate until after another meal. Janet laid in double stock yesterday I suppose—eh?’

At half-past two, Mr. Evelyn and Bridget set off for Risdon Ferry,\* in sight of which the ‘Anson’ lay. From Macquarie Street they reached the ferry at half-past three; there a boat awaited parties going on board the ship.

‘Now then, miss, hold on, and I’ll keep close behind you.’

And Miss D’Urban ascended the companion and stood on the hulk. Her uncle beckoned her to follow him below.

A female standing at a high desk by the open door of the first cabin, raised her head and bowed a business-like bow as they advanced. She was evidently the monarch of all she surveyed.

‘Is that Mrs. Bowden?’ whispered Bridget.

The question was overheard and answered by the ruling spirit.

‘No, Mrs. Bowden is in England. *I* act in her place.’ Another, and still more official bow followed. Accompanied by one of the officers, Mr. Evelyn and his niece arraigned themselves at Mrs. Deputy’s bar.

‘I want a servant-of-all-work; can you recommend me one, Mrs. Deputy?’

\* Corrupted from *Restdown*.

‘We do not recommend; there are several people eligible, but they will not afford much choice, Mr. Evelyn.’

‘Except to friends!’ drily suggested that gentleman.

Mrs. Deputy bowed at once dignity and indignity, and repeated, ‘There are several prisoners eligible.’ True to the daring contradictions of Tasmanian words and their meanings, ‘eligible’ is not intended to signify aptness or suitability. A woman eligible for service is rarely fitted for service; the adjective only informs the master or mistress that she is ready to be hired.

‘Is one Martha Grylls eligible, Mrs. Deputy?’

‘Grylls, Grylls, Grylls, let me see,’ drawing her finger down the list before her.

The attendant officer chimed in:

‘Yes; she becomes so this very day.’

‘Thank you, Miss Perkins,’ bowed Mrs. Deputy, with an air that plainly said, ‘I will thank you not to interfere.’

‘Grylls, Grylls,’ and her finger travelled on.

‘You cannot know whom you ask for, if you want her, sir!’ whispered the cowed Miss Perkins.

‘Thank you, Miss Perkins, perhaps you will leave the arrangement of this matter to me,’ again bowed the commandant.

‘Martha Grylls is at your service, Mr. Evelyn; shall I send for her?’

‘ I will trouble you, if you please.’

‘ Would not you prefer my calling several women, sir ?’ asked the attendant officer.

‘ I will thank you, Miss Perkins, to call Martha Grylls,’ responded Mrs. Deputy.

The little officer had no choice but to obey ; so bowing obedience, she sidled to the grating which divided the prison from the officers’ quarters ; and then standing on tiptoe, desired a Miss Snub to send forward ‘ that Martha Grylls.’

‘ Ordered forward, Martha Grylls !’ shouted a female Stentor ; and, uprising from a distant rank, immediately appeared a tall, elegant woman, who, passing Miss Snub with a curtsy, came into Mrs. Deputy’s awful presence.

She had on the usual brown serge skirt (so short as to show a masculine pair of half-boots), a jacket of brown and yellow gingham, a dark blue cotton kerchief, and a prim white calico cap, whose narrow border was kept in frill by help of a thread run through it, completed her dress. The grotesque coarseness of this attire could not *hide* the inherent grace of the prisoner. Still dignified and beautiful before her future master, stood the wearer of those rough knitted blue stockings and clownish shoes.

Her cap was untied.

‘ Tie your cap, Martha Grylls,’ commanded Miss Perkins.

Martha mechanically obeyed.



‘It would better become you, Grylls, to curtsy the same as your mates, than to try to imitate your betters,’ continued the little woman, conscious that Martha’s obeisance surpassed her genuflecting capabilities.

‘The curtsy was meant for *me*, I think, Miss Perkins,’ said Mrs. Deputy.

In consideration of Martha’s presence, the rebuked attendant darted daggers at Mrs. Deputy.

Mr. Evelyn put a few questions to Martha, all of which she quietly and satisfactorily answered.

‘I will hire this Grylls if you please, Mrs. Deputy.’

Preliminaries having been settled, Martha was sent to tie up her bundle, and business being over, Mrs. Deputy came down from the tip-top of dignity, and seemed not wholly disinclined for a talk.

‘The appearance of the woman decided me at once, Mrs. Deputy; to belie *that* countenance, she must be a monster.’

‘With a good master she will not belie it, Mr. Evelyn. Wise management will do much for her. Her police character is against her, and her crimes you are aware—’

‘Yes, yes; but I do not heed the amount of crime: indiscriminate association generally makes it theoretically equal amongst prisoners. It is my opinion that both men and females come out of these probations worse than they went in. Re-

formations rarely, if ever, commence within prison walls; and reformation the more tardily begins in proportion to the length of durance. We have an extra task to perform on a probationer.'

Mrs. Deputy looked much hurt, and exclaimed, '*Here* on the "Anson," surely, Mr. Evelyn, you do not call it indiscriminate association: we have distinct classes—bad, better, and best. Surely nothing can be superior to Mrs. Bowden's excellent system.'

'Than Mrs. Bowden I know no more gifted and prudent Lady-superintendent; were all officers selected with like discernment, it would be well for the prisoner. Mrs. Deputy, may I take my niece through the wards?' asked Mr. Evelyn, anxious to avoid a discussion.

The lady only bowed assent; for she was deeply affronted at an attack on a system of which she was representative in place of the highly respected Mrs. Bowden: perhaps she was the more deeply wounded, because a conviction of the fallacy of the system already worked in her own mind. It is a natural weakness with many persons to be angry with a scruple they can no longer conscientiously resist. She just dignified to say, 'Miss Perkins, this gentleman wishes to see the "Anson;"' and turned to her desk. The little creature came hopping over with a sort of sidewise movement, not unlike that of an impudent cock-sparrow which can

scarcely hop for pertness. Pecking to Mr. Evelyn's side, she whispered, 'Though I pity you, sir, I am downright glad to get rid of that woman. The trouble I have had with her!'

This was only meant for Mr. Evelyn; nevertheless it reached the vigilant deputy's ear. 'I am sure *I* shall be glad, Miss Perkins. Often have I been pained by the foolish complaints made against her and poor Lucy Grenlow, when she was here. You know I am obliged to take my officers' part before the convicts; you ought therefore to refrain from bringing such nonsensical cases for me to judge. Had my duties allowed me time to pay particular attention to Martha, I should not have had reason to punish her so much.' As Mrs. Deputy was thus properly delivering herself, Miss Perkins stood a deferential listener; she just hopped off in time to hear a mutter that sounded very like—'I have as much trouble with the officers as with the women.'

Bridget clung to her uncle's arm as they passed through rows of prisoners, who were variously employed in working, reading, and learning, it being their school-hour. Each file arose and curtsied as the party passed.

Ever and anon Miss Perkins issued orders to some unfortunate.

'Mary Gull, tie your cap. What, Mary Pike, yours off! The next offence you'll go down stairs.'

Mary understood the allusion, and hastily put on her cap.

‘Sarah Gubb, you are talking there. Jane Dawson, where’s your curtsey? Why don’t you rise, Ellen Bracket? Muggins, I shall complain of you.’

‘Would you like to walk through the cells, sir?’

They went below. In one cell was a captive, kicking and stamping violently. Miss Perkins thought fit to soothe her by rapping at the door.

‘You don’t think that’s the way to get out, do you, Stooks?’

‘’Twas you got me in, you *did*, you beast!’

‘If I wasn’t very indulgent, Stooks, I should get you double for that,’ said the maternal Perkins.

‘Is the devil indulgent, I should like to know, you old cant?’ cried Stooks.

With a deprecating smile at Bridget, Miss Perkins stopped at Number 10, whence issued an imploring voice—

‘Do beg for me; I’m quite subdued, indeed I am, Miss Love. Oh! it’s Miss Perkins. I beg pardon, ma’am, I thought ’twas Miss Love,’ the prisoner was heard to sigh.

Passing on, they came to stalls where different trades—cobblery, bonnet-making, &c.—were being carried on.

‘Do let us go, uncle; it is so dreadful to have

these poor creatures made a show of,' whispered Bridget.

'They are accustomed to it,' answered Miss Perkins to the second clause of Bridget's speech.

'As the eels are, eh, Miss Perkins?' asked Mr. Evelyn.

'Oh, they keep each other in countenance. We look at them as a lot, not as individuals.'

Here her eye fell on Martha Grylls, who was waiting, bundle in hand, at the grating.

'Follow us, and don't be talking there, Grylls. I don't wish to lose sight of you.'

'Come along, my woman,' said Mr. Evelyn, kindly.

'No; walk before us, if you please, Grylls. I don't wish to lose sight of you, I repeat.'

Martha obeyed without a word.

All the women tried to give her a nod by the sly; and many anxious eyes followed the party as the grated door closed, and an audible sigh was simultaneously heaved by those whom it imprisoned. Each prisoner envied Martha, and wished it had been her lot to fall to so sweet a looking lady as that bright-eyed girl who smiled on her in passing.

What lay beyond those gates not one could tell. They were as the gates of death—all doubt and mystery beyond. None ever returned to tell of the untried world to which they led.

Strange and vague are the mental picturings the prisoned female forms of the land of her exile, which she knows lies little further than a stone's throw from her. Some think, on leaving the 'Anson,' they are to be turned adrift to all the horrors of an unexplored region; others that they will be driven to market for sale. The cunning and malicious amongst them delight in filling the minds of their less gifted associates with the most terrible apprehensions of the barbarities awaiting them on their departure from their probation. It is with a thrill of cruel suspense that such prisoners first plant their foot on Tasmanian ground.

In this respect the male convicts do not suffer so acutely. Their doubts, hopes, and fears are answered, realised, or crushed almost immediately on arriving at the colony. Their probationary course does not add suspense to sorrow. At once formed into gangs, they learn the worst, and are sent to labour in the roads, or work on public buildings. The torture of suspense is not added to it.

Miss Perkins accompanied Mr. Evelyn and his niece to the deck, where she mysteriously beckoned Bridget aside—

'I hope you do not mean to employ Grylls about children.'

She gave a significant wink. 'Of course, though, you don't. You guess why? It is not usual to

tell the crime; but really I think it my duty to break rule to you. Do you understand me?’

Bridget looked a negative.

Martha had drawn near enough to hear Miss Perkins’s friendly caution. Casting a glance of unutterable contempt on little Perkins, she stepped to Miss D’Urban, and herself solved the significant wink.

‘Miss Perkins wishes you to know that I am sent out for murder. She would suggest the impropriety of making me a nurse.’

Bridget turned very pale, and cast an imploring look on the little officer, who, boiling over with injured prerogative, was on the point of reprimanding Martha’s audacity, when Mr. Evelyn called them to be quick—the boat was waiting.

‘Good morning, Miss Perky. We are much favoured by your civilities.’

The officer was hurt at the inharmonious name bestowed upon her, and vented her spite by exclaiming, as Martha was on the first step of the companion—

‘I hope you’ll behave better *now*, Grylls, or you’ll soon learn the difference between factory and here.’

Martha turned abruptly on her. A second move, and she had been on her way back to the cells, instead of on the road to Hobarton. The crimson cheek, flashing eye, and quivering lip, a

second more had met their chastisement; but Bridget's beseeching gesture once more prevailed. Quietly turning from her persecutor, Martha descended the ladder.

'Good morning, Miss Perky,' waved Mr. Evelyn, abstractedly, as though his voice mechanically embodied his opinion in a *name* expressive of the little upstart, pecking at him from the deck.

'That horrid woman!' cried Bridget.

A quick nod and frown from Mr. Evelyn stopped what further she would have said.

A slight smile overspread the prisoner's face; but it soon faded into a look of anxious sadness. It mattered not to her whether the coast was beautiful or barren; whether the landscape was rendered vital by the upward wreathing of the blue smoke from pleasant homesteads; or whether its desolate grandeur was made more dreary by the long blank masonry of penal life.

She started as from a dream when the boat jerked against the jetty. A ghastly pallor struck her every feature as she stepped ashore. For an instant she covered her face; then, gradually withdrawing her hands, the Maida Gwynnham of olden days discovered herself in the unabated dignity of that uprearing head, and in the strength of purpose outshining from the purple depths of those undimmed orbs.

A strength of purpose that even now was to be



tried ; and if the trial, surprising an unguarded post, be victorious for a season, who shall exult ?

She was prepared to confront the hardships of convict existence. She was prepared for taunts, for jibes, for suspicions, for enemies, and felt that she could face them ; but she was not prepared to meet any of these as they were now about to assail her.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE INITIATION.—WITHOUT.

THE cab was waiting for them at the ferry.

‘Get up on the box, Martha. Coachman, help her.’

But she had mounted ere the driver could proffer his assistance.

‘A likesome un,’ winked the man to Mr. Evelyn.  
‘You’ve always got your eye-tooth about ye, sir.’

‘Now begins my public martyrdom. Now shall I feel the blighting breath of scorn,’ thought Maida. ‘Would God that it would smite me down at once!’

With an eye of impatient curiosity she viewed this new sphere of future suffering looming in the distance. She longed to hasten it, but with the longing of one that craves to know the worst. She longed to meet the first eye that should witness her disgrace. She longed to hear the first word that should break the fearful silence of this strange phase of life, but with the desire of one who yearns to learn her fate.

She was soon satisfied.

The coachman, a good-tempered, ruddy-faced old man, looking at her full of wonder, jerked a sentence from the side of his ample mouth.

‘Got in a good berth, young ooman—that you has!’

The familiarity of this congratulation was worse than scorn, and Maida involuntarily shuddered.

‘Your hair’s a-grow’d nicely.’

He seemed mystified at Maida’s tacit non-approval.

‘The women likes a bit o’ gossip general,’ he muttered. A bright thought occurred to him.

‘She don’t hear me for them rattling wheels. Your hair’s a-grow’d butiful, my dear,’ he repeated, jerking, more sidewise and emphatical.

Worse than three days in the dark cells! thought Maida.

‘You feels queer like, my dear, don’t ye?’ he persevered, seeing she had turned very pale. ‘Never mind! I knows ezac’ly what you feels. You fancies all the folks will stare at ye, so you feels sheepy-like. No such thing, my dear. They sees hundreds of you every day. They won’t take no more notice of ye than if you was a leg of mutton. I’m a man, my dear.’

Here Maida ventured to peep at him, and perceived she had mistaken rough kindness for brutal officiousness, and her better sense accepted the civility (?), so honestly offered.

The old man seemed pleased, and went on to say—

‘I’m a man, my dear; yet when I fust came out of Tench with the gang, blast me if I wasn’t nigh to fent. Thinks I, every mother’s son on ’em ’ll be gaping at me. No such thing, my dear; nobody tookt no more notice on me than if I’d been a brisket o’ beef. Lots on us is just equal to *none* on us. Now *you* feels like me; but there’s no call for it. Cheer up! says I. It’s fine out here; worth a while to get out any how. Ah! ah! ha!’

Tench and gang were Greek to Maida; yet she fancied they referred to prison days, and that her commiserator *was* or *had* been a convict. She wished to ask, but, judging by her own sensibility, feared the question might be offensive; so she merely replied—

‘Thank you.’

‘Kindly welcome, my dear. A-u-h! you’ll get on fine. You don’t seem like to get into trouble very often. Them what takes a drop gets oftenest into trouble out here—and home *too*, I’m thinking’ (he added thoughtfully). ‘Anything that way, my dear? Now keep heart; don’t ye mind: they won’t look at ye no more than at a loin o’ lamb.’

A party of ladies passed.

‘There now, did ’em gape? Look over yonder; d’ye see that fine dressed ’ooman? She ’m govern-

ment. I remember bringing her in from 'Anson.' That gentleman there, what pretends to be—he's convict, came in last load after I; so you've got fine company. The girls marry like mad out here.'

Maida could bear no more; her brain grew dizzy; she grasped the rail on her side of the dickey, and the man's arm on the other.

'That's right, my dear; 'old tight. I loves to purtect ye. Old Hawkins is known out here; he's been a government man, and knows all about it 'Old on, you'm queer like.'

Mr. Evelyn called from the cab—

'Hawkins, I'll thank you not to talk with my woman.'

'All right, sir.'

The vehicle suddenly stopped.

''Old on, my dear. I wants to speak to the master.'

Off jumped the old man, popping his bright face into the cab. He whispered—

'The 'ooman takes on uncommon; she'm nigh to fent; never see'd sich; more acute than most on 'em. She'll drop off the box any minute; excoose me, but 'tisin't safe there.'

'Shall she come inside, Bridget? do you object?'

Bridget looked as much as to say, 'Is it likely I should?'

‘ Here, my dear, you goes in there ’long with the quality.’

Maida hesitated, but only for an instant. Her overloaded heart could not brook the weight of importunate kindness Hawkins would heap upon it.

‘ That’s right, my dear ; keep a good face on’t. You’re nothing to them mor’n a fillet of veal,’ winked Hawkins.

Glancing her thanks at him, she sank into a corner, and the grateful relief induced another, still more potent, still more needed.

She burst into tears.

That was enough for Bridget. It was a very Bochim within that coach.

Following the impulse of her spirit, Bridget’s hand had unconsciously worked its way from under her shawl, and found a resting-place on Maida’s, where it lay so lightly, withal so significantly, that it gave the prisoner to understand more by one of its thrills than I could write, or you could read, in an hour. Suddenly remembering her uncle’s presence, and peculiar strictness with convicts, she withdrew her hand, turning her head, at the same time, to meet the dread frown of reproof she expected ; but Mr. Evelyn was watching the race-running trees with an interest rarely displayed by sober middle-aged men ; his fingers were tabouring on the glass, instead of motioning displeasure to

her, and Bridget was very glad to escape the tokens of an incipient scolding.

‘Oh, these blessed tears! but for them I should have gone wild. Since I left England I have only once experienced their power,’ said Maida, after a while.

‘Do you feel better now, Martha?’ asked Bridget, ready to give over her cry directly it suited her for whom she wept.

‘Yes, thank you, I am greatly refreshed.’

Uncle Ev being anxious to prevent another scene, asked Maida if she had any question she would like to ask.

‘I thank you, *none*, but shall be glad of your permission to drop my present name.’

‘Oh, yes; any name you prefer will answer my purpose; to the Comptroller-general you must remain Martha Grylls. What do you wish to call yourself?’

‘Maida Gwynnham.’

Mr. Evelyn’s opinion was not discernible on his face, but Miss D’Urban’s shone in every dimple of her blooming cheeks.

‘I’m so glad! Lucy said so; won’t she be pleased, uncle?’

‘Lucy Grenlow?’ earnestly gasped Maida.

Mr. Evelyn saw that his dignity was at stake; so wisely lost no time in granting a permission that was evidently not about to be sought.

‘You can explain to Gwynnham where she is going, Bridget. Maida, my niece, Miss D’Urban, will talk to you.’

‘We heard of—of you from a nice little thing,’ (Mr. Evelyn frowned)—‘our housemaid, I mean,’ stammered Bridget, correcting herself.

‘Lucy Grenlow?’

‘Yes, it seems she has been counting the very hours to your release, and she reckoned you would be ready to-day.’

‘Dear child,’ adding slowly, as if in thought, ‘she needs a protector.’

Bridget knew this would not agree with her uncle. She turned towards him half timidly. The trees were racing again; *perhaps* he was betting on them; *certainly* he was too busy to notice either of his companions.

‘Here we are,’ cried Bridget, as they drove into sight of the Lodge, Macquarie Street.

With a pardonable vanity, Lucy had decked herself out in her best Sunday. It would be such a glory to surprise Maida, who only knew her in prison clothes. She had on a neat blue mousseline de laine gown; a smart, white apron; the everlasting knitted collar, fastened with an old bow of Miss D’Urban’s; and a jaunty little cap, trimmed with pink tarlatan, set off the whole most becomingly.

She was standing at the door, awaiting the expected arrival; but no sooner did she espy Maida through the cab window, than she darted



into the house, just as a child which, in the coyness of its delight, runs to hide from a pleasure it has been anticipating. Not all the rings at the door-bell could bring Lucy back from her retreat behind the staircase recess. Mr. Evelyn tried to look severe. Bridget tried to look amused, and would have succeeded but for Maida, whose vain attempt to look calm was painfully portrayed in an effort of countenance that reminded Mr. Evelyn more of a grimace which he had noticed on the features of death, than of an expression indicative of pleasure.

Coachee was the only one of the party who contrived to look what he meant to look, or to feel what he intended to exhibit as his feeling. His rubicund face became more jolly, and a broad grin of satisfaction distended his ample mouth to its utmost width of elasticity. He *felt* pleased, *looked* pleased, and *grinned* pleasure at having set his protégée down at so promising a home. The old man knew every house in Hobarton that had the power of hiring a female prisoner, and he could foretell the fate of any likely woman by her master or mistress. According to the place at which he was directed to draw up, he could prophesy of her future prospects; and many were the kind words of encouragement, caution, or sympathy, he would offer, as the case of his woman needed. Now it would be—

‘Xcoose me, my dear, but if you bears with the mistress’s twittings and suspicions to first, you’ll be pretty comfortable after a bit.’

Then to a less fortunate candidate—

‘You’ll think old Hawkins a rum block, but, says I, you may all as well know first as last. Do what you will, you’ll *never* please the master. He’m one of them there sort as doesn’t think government folks has any feelings of no kind; therefore, when you wants to go, if *scheming* won’t do better, have a row to once; if it’s a wise one, ’twill only get you a month (to most three months), and lop your ticket a bit; but that’s better nor having the life eat off your very vitals, says I.’

To a third, as to Maida, he would prognosticate bright days. Having given her her bundle, he vouchsafed his capacious hand. As a lady, she would have been glad to condescend with that grace which discovers no condescension; but now there was a tremble in her hand as she submitted it to his grasp, for she saw that, as an equal, nay, as a superior, the coachman proffered this familiarity.

‘Well, good-bye, my dear. Don’t ye mind a bit; keep out of factory and drink, and you’ll be a ‘T. L. soon. The master don’t give your clothes yet; but when you gets stays, blast me, if you won’t take amazing; your figure’s bu-ti-ful, and your hair’s grow’d fine—hardly know’d you’d a been cropped.’

Shaking her hand until the pain reached her very heart, he repeated—

‘Your hair’s a-grow’d bu-ti-ful!’

This assurance was intended as the richest balm to her wounded spirit ; it was his infallible remedy for convict ailments of the mental order.

Hawkins had been a butcher, and from the dead or live stock of his former trade he drew his not overflattering similes.

‘ Well, Maida, it seems you must go to Lucy, since she will not come to you. Poor girl ! I wonder her little brain has not addled by this : she has been in a state of excitement all to-day. This way, Maida ; down those stairs, and turn to your left,’ pointed Bridget.

Maida was on the last stair, when Lucy sprang into her arms. Great joy was in that meeting—as great as though the dramatis personæ had been ladies, perhaps greater—they being captives in the captive’s land.

There was a rap at the parlour door, and with a smiling face, and after a brisk curtsey, Lucy entered.

‘ What time will you tea, please mem—sir ?’

Without waiting for answer, she continued—

‘ Please, sir, may I cook a chop for Maida ? It’ll be a bit of a treat. She’s dreadful tired, and wearisome all over.’

‘ Yes, and whilst you are about it, cook a couple for us. We have had no dinner, you know, and three chops make no more trouble than one, eh ?’

‘ Lor’, no, sir, nothing’s no trouble ; but I

thought, sir, to do Maida's right away now; she's faintish. You shall have yours nice and hot, done separate.'

The events of the day had given Lucy a dash of the champion and heroine. Last evening she would as soon have committed murder as have allowed any one the preference to the master. When she brought in the tea equipage, a dark circle round her eyes told of tears, and she seemed ready for another cry.

'Well, Lucy, did Maida enjoy her chop and tea?' asked Bridget.

Lucy burst out,—'No, mem, she tried for to eat it, and then when I went for to answer the door, I met Rover running out with it, the nasty brute. Lor, mem, I can't go for to tell the master, but I'd as soon see a lady doing of dirty work as she—she'm so grand like—without going for to mean it.'

It was indeed doleful work in the kitchen. Lucy remembered *her* first cup of tea and slice of white bread and butter, and what angels' food she had thought that meal. She recollected what a paradise the kitchen had appeared in her sight after the dreary scenes of prison—Millbank, the voyage, and the 'Anson.' She remembered the first moment of comparative freedom when, set down to a cheerful tête-à-tête with her fellow servant, she had almost forgotten that she was still a

prisoner. She had looked forward to go through all these pleasant surprises again with her friend, and in the warmth of her affection she had determined that, if the kitchen had been a paradise to *her*, it should be the third heaven to Maida.

Everything was set with scrupulous neatness. No relic of Janet's filthy administration offended the eye: all was snug. The little oaken, round table, the small brown teapot, the dear old willow-pattern plates, and blue cups and saucers bore a decidedly English air: the white loaf, the pat of butter, were almost objects of reverence. No convict heart, long estranged from such sights, could be proof against so many accumulated comforts. 'Come back, poor wanderer, we wait to make thee human once again! come back, we wait to re-civilize thee! we wait to make a home for thee!' these comforts have said to more prisoners than Lucy Grenlow.

But Maida Gwynnham was not a convict in *heart* though crushed by convict *scorn*—though dragged by convict *chains*. In compassion to Lucy she tried to reciprocate the almost infantile joy of her blithe companion. She tried to smile between each of her apostrophes, glad that they followed each other too quickly to allow of a reply, for reply Maida could not make; her soul was full to overflowing, full of such varied emotions that, had they

appeared on paper, they would have appeared a list of contrarieties.

‘Here,’ exclaimed Lucy, seizing her hand and leading her forward, ‘here we are all alone! No more ‘orrid Perkinses hopping after us, no more nasty Snubses a thumbing of us. Look, Maida. look! here’s bread—real white bread! butter! cups and saucers—no more dreadful tin panikins, and tea—real hot tea, and flowers, Maida, flowers! Oh! won’t we be happy!’

She gazed wistfully and respectfully into Maida’s face, and perceived that the smile she saw there extended not beyond the lip; even *she* could tell that a pained heart lay beneath the specious guise. The barbarians, watching when St. Paul should fall by the insidious power of the deadly reptile, were ready to deify him, as they saw the holy man, uninjured, shake the viper from him. So Lucy, when the charms she had prepared failed to affect Maida, regarded almost with superstitious awe the wondrous being who could stand proof against such enchantery, and from that time a feeling of dread mixed with her worship of Maida.

Absorbed in apparent reverie, Mr. Evelyn sat in his arm-chair. Emmeline and Bridget from time to time glanced at him to see if his thoughts were dispersing sufficiently for them to open a conversation with him; but no, Uncle Ev was not in

a mood to be disturbed. There was a contraction of his brow that they well understood ; for when that sign of the starfish appeared on his forehead, it was a sure token that his mind was not at home to the public. Both the girls were speculating on what might be the result of the rather sudden appearance of the starfish, when the timepiece warned for nine. Uncle Ev started up, chair and all, and came down with a bounce at the table ; then drawing himself into it by the arms of the chair he had brought behind him, he smoothed the cloth as though smoothing away a difficulty, and uttered the monosyllabic command—‘Prayers.’

Bridget placed the family Bible before him.

‘Ring the bell.’

‘We are here, Uncle Ev,’ gently suggested Emmeline.

‘I know it, my dear—ring the bell, Bridget.’

A ray of delight crossed Emmeline’s face as she heard the ting-a-tong of the bell, and she met Bridget’s inquiring expression with such a smile as one could fancy an angel would give, when it had borne a message of glad tidings to some forlorn sinner.

Lucy appeared in obedience to the summons.

‘Prayers,’ repeated Mr. Evelyn without raising his eyes.

‘The young ladies is here, sir,’ said Lucy,

naturally supposing that since her young mistresses sat at the back of her master they had escaped his notice.

‘Come to prayers; you, Gwynnham, and Robert,’ nodded Mr. Evelyn.

She stared; why what next? and left the room to proclaim the news in the kitchen, almost stumbling over the stairs in her eagerness to do so. ‘There! we’s to go into devotions all in honour of you. I’ve only been in three times since I’ve been here, and that was when the master was out of the way, and Parson Evelyn called us in; he don’t mind knilling down along with *we*, but the master says he won’t have no such hypocritical doings.’

When they were seated in the parlour, Mr Evelyn chose the advice given in the third chapter of Colossians, and before kneeling down, he expounded, not the Scripture, which was too clear to need explanation, but his own intentions:—

‘I mean, Maida, Lucy, and Robert, to commence with you as I have not lately commenced with any convict. I mean to try you, and if you deceive me, as others have done, I vow in the sight of the Lord I will never kneel with a prisoner again. Do not flatter yourselves that I am prompted to this concession by anything I have heard in your favour; for you have to *work* for my good opinion. I permit you to join our family prayers as a last trial at an experiment which I



have hitherto found unsuccessful, and not as a reward to any character which you may have brought with you. I never heed reports either for or against prisoners whom I receive from Government.'

The half of this address was incomprehensible to poor Lucy. Had it been wholly directed to herself she would have been terrified, and her terror would have interpreted it into the first stage of a journey to the Cascades for the expiation of some unknown offence; but as it was for division between herself and fellow servants, her sagacity discovered that it could not be a *threat*, whilst her admiration for Maida turned it into a rhapsody on the coming glories of the Gwynnham reign. Maida lingered at the door at the conclusion of the prayer.

'No, not to-night, Maida; you can go to bed now. I will talk with you early to-morrow morning.'

She retired, and seeking Lucy, asked her—  
'Does Mr.—what is his name?'

'*The master*,' replied Lucy, with delicious simplicity. 'I spose that's the language out here—so I says it.'

Maida faintly smiled, and continued—'Does the master generally give orders the first night?—perhaps it is from kindness that he tells me to go to bed?'

'Sure to be to *you*! he always tells *us* straight

away everything, and frightens us dreadful the very first night—he did me and Janet—and so he did Peg Walters and Susan.’

Maida returned to the parlour.

‘If you please, sir, if it is in consideration to me that you do not give orders now, perhaps I may say that it would be a relief to me to receive your commands to-night.’

‘Very well; come in—that will do—shut the door, and stand where you are.’

Bridget managed to stretch before her uncle to reach the snuffers; then turning towards him she syllabled:—

‘Let—her—sit—down—*do*.’

‘No, Bridget,’ responded Mr. Evelyn, aloud.

The prisoner stood erect against the door, her face directed as though looking at her master, but her eyes fixed upon the ground, as much from weariness as from inward depression; the long, dark lash drooped over them so heavily that they had no choice but to bend earthwards, unless they would close entirely. Just as she stood there she would have made a beautiful variation of the Greek Slave, had Hiram Powers wanted to vary his immortal marble.

Mr. Evelyn was well accustomed to his present labour; nevertheless, there was an audible quaver in his voice that a prolonged ‘Ahem’ did not wholly remedy when he commenced:—

‘ Young woman, there is a new life before you ; it will be your own fault if it prove one of degradation beyond that which attaches itself to a convict. Such degradation you cannot escape ; the stain of convictism can never be erased ; but you may so far hide it that you may become a respectable and useful member of society *out here*—in the lower ranks of life, of course. Some masters advise their servants to encourage thoughts of return to their native land ; *I* as strenuously advise to the contrary. Lay up your wages, *not* for your homeward passage money, but as a proof of your earnestness in making repentant resolutions. Let your best energies strive for the goal Freedom in *this* land, *not* in your own country—in this land which adopts *you*—a land that is generously willing, when you shall have earned its confidence, to share with you all the privileges of its free people—privileges which Britain will never again offer when once you have offended her by selling your birthright for the transient allurements of crime. I would have you cherish every fond, dutiful, and remorseful remembrance of your parents and other relatives, whilst I would urge you to forget your *country*—not from want of love to her, not from enmity against her (God forbid that either of these should actuate you !)—but because you could never more be happy there. There would arise too many twitting memories, too many unavailing regrets, too many un-

timely reproaches, to make your return a *peaceful* one, or your dwelling a *home*. Where justice ends injustice too often begins. The demands of justice will be satisfied by your penance here; but there are other demands equally important, though less imperious, which will not be appeased by that which suffices the law. Such demands will querulously follow you to your grave. There have been more hearts broken, more hopes crushed in returning to England, than ever there have been in leaving it. Relapse into crime has not unfrequently been the bitter expedient adopted by those who, full of cheerful anticipation, have gone back to the home of their days of innocence only to lament their having left a land that promised to be nobly oblivious of the *past* so long as the *present* deserved its favour. Maida Gwynnham, if you have parents or dear friends, what I am about to say will sound with harshness on your ear, but in no harsh spirit I say it. To be warned of a painful possibility *now* may save you from a painful certainty hereafter. Therefore do I tell you, that those *very* friends who may now be so urgent for your return, who (impelled by the quickened impulse of affection) now hold out every bait that love can prompt to tempt you back to their embrace, when your sentence shall have expired—those very friends will be the first to remind you of your former guilt when you are again one with them. How truly so-

ever it may *forgive*, it is the weakness of human nature to be unable to *forget*; should *your* friends, however, act a better part and scrupulously keep their compact with you, your *own* sensibilities would militate against your peace, by perpetually imagining insult where no insult was intended—by fancying taunts where none existed. My advice, founded on long observation, is, look on the *past* as left behind you on the “Anson,” look on the *present* as a precious boon by which a happy future may be attained. Keep your eye steadily fixed on that future, and, God helping you, you cannot fail of success. *Then* invite your friends to *you*. Distant from the scene of your fall, your disgrace will also seem distant. It is hard to harbour resentful feelings on a foreign soil; the right of precedence will be yours, and procure for you a respect which you would vainly seek at home.’

Mr. Evelyn had wrought himself to a pitch of fervour that he had seldom reached on similar occasions. His addresses to his servants were always solemn, and somewhat severe—always searching, and somewhat sarcastic; but to-night’s speech was distinguished by a solemnity devoid of satire, a severity only severe by necessity of subject.

Whether it was a glimpse of the spirit that hid in the statue-like figure before him, whether it was the beauty of the woman or the enormity of the

crime for which she was expatriated, that warmed him into so unusual display of energy, it were difficult to determine, but it is certain his voice assumed an emphasis which gave unwonted force to his words, and made an earnest impromptu of what might have appeared a stern formality.

‘On the other hand, Maida, I warn you that vigilant eyes will ever be upon you, watching your actions. The slightest liberty taken with the indulgence now granted you in the comparative freedom of service will be as severely punished as honest endeavours and obedient conduct will be rewarded. The very arm outstretched to welcome you back to honourable society will be the one to unsparingly chastise the first breach of law.

‘I have done—I leave these subjects to your serious contemplation and to your good sense. I shall be happy to converse with you on any part you may wish more fully explained.’

During this speech a ghastly pallor had gathered on Maida’s face, her lips had fallen apart, not after the manner of one who listens intently, but with the listlessness of that languor which unhinges the frame after a long resistance to physical and mental fatigue. She leaned heavily against the door, whilst her knees smote against each other in seeking to support themselves.

By this Mr. Evelyn felt half afraid that he had appeared too interested in his charge to Maida and

determined to atone for his weakness by an examination of unabated strictness.

Again sounding an admonitory ahem, he desired Bridget to resume her seat, and then asked—

‘Is your health good, Gwynnham?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Your mistress is from home: until her return you will attend to Miss D’Urban’s commands. You are to be general servant and must be ready to assist wherever you are wanted. Your wages will be seven pounds a year, and I shall add a sovereign yearly for seven years, so long as you deserve it.’

‘What is your sentence?’

‘For life.’

‘A lifer! That is against your future prospects, but not so far as I am concerned.’ Several shorter ahems not unlike grunts.

‘You do not seem satisfied, Maida Gwynnham. Speak up—have you been led to expect higher wages?’

‘Thank you, I am more than satisfied.’ There was a bitterness in her voice that did not escape Mr. Evelyn; he stored it by for after consideration.

‘Can you cook?’

Maida’s lip quivered. No answer came.

Bridget put herself before her uncle, and whispered, ‘Shall I question her? I know how to.’

Bridget also knew that she would manage it more delicately.

‘No, Bridget! *I* am as much pained in thus talking to the woman as *you* and *she* are in listening. Is it not kinder to let her know at once what she is to expect as a convict servant, than to foster hopes which would mock her when she reached her kitchen? Your show of feeling is more distasteful to her than ever my remarks may be. I am not slow to perceive that Maida is endowed with a nature which will *double* all the sufferings inflicted by law, to say nothing of her former position.’

Maida aroused herself—it was enough for her to know that another was being rebuked on her account. In almost a cheerful voice she exclaimed—

‘I pray of you, Miss D’Urban, not to vex yourself. It is indeed kind of Mr. Evelyn, I mean master, to speak so faithfully. I am tired to-night, but to-morrow, and I trust ever after, I shall appreciate his warnings.’ Her whole manner changed, and assuming the expression of an interested hearer she awaited Mr. Evelyn’s pleasure, which was to repeat in an undisturbed tone—

‘Can you cook?’

‘Not much, sir; I have not had practice, but I will do my best.’

‘Can you wash?’

‘A little; we washed for the officers on the “Anson.”’

‘Are you a good needlewoman?’



‘I am considered so. I worked a great deal for Miss Perkins.’

‘Are you willing to be told? Your mistress will soon make a good servant of you, if you are obedient and willing.’

‘I will try, Mr. Evelyn.’

‘*Sir*, if you please.’

‘I will try, sir.’

‘Do you drink? or rather were you given to liquor before your sentence?’

No answer, but a flush on her cheek.

‘Do you drink, I choose to be answered, Maida?’

Bridget was making her way out of the room, looking more flushed than Maida and far more miserable.

‘Come back, Bridget, do not be foolish.’

It was a happy interruption—the colour had time to fade from Maida’s cheek, and we suppose Uncle Ev forgot he had not been answered for he passed on.

‘Have you any children?’

‘I’m not married.’

‘No consequence. Have you any children in the Queen’s Orphan School?’

Had this question been delayed a week, Maida would have known the dire necessity of putting it alike to married and unmarried, and that it is one as commonly asked by colonial employers as the

every-day inquiries, can you cook? or can you scrub? As it was, she imagined the question an insult directed immediately at herself, and her eye burned, indignant, at the cruelty. What might have been the result of the fire kindling within and darting from beneath her dark lashes, those best can tell who are learned in prison discipline. That the result was harmless we are glad to report. The imploring gaze of the trembling Bridget for a third time averted an impending evil, and Maida smothered her rebellious spirit in an abrupt 'No.' She dared venture no more.

'Are—you—sure? Mind, I can ascertain beyond doubt whether you are speaking truth or not. I have only to walk to New Town.'

Here Bridget interposed.

'Uncle did not hear you say you were not married, Maida. She is not married, uncle.'

This recalled Mr. Evelyn to a knowledge of his niece's presence: with an annoyed nod he said, 'True, true. Now, Maida, I have done with you. I make a plan of saying *at once* all of a disagreeable nature, it will be your own fault if ever you hear of such subjects again. Do make me your friend, and take in good part those precautionary rules, which may bear the aspect of privations. Doubtless Lucy has already told you of them. We never allow our women to go out alone, until such time as they have proved their trustworthiness beyond the fear that

they may return intoxicated, or be taken by the constable to the watchhouse. Our next rule is equally painful but not so important. We make our servants wear their government clothes until their first quarter's wages become due. We have been cheated into this rule by prisoners who having begged an advance in order to put off their badge of shame, have spent their money at the tavern and then given Government the benefit of the next three months' labour.

‘One word more, Maida. Let me warn you not to renew acquaintance with any of your shipmates except Lucy. Much of the after misery of female prisoners arises from a continuance of the objectionable intercourse which, not being able to escape, they learn to delight in during their voyage and probation. You will need moral courage to remain stedfast in this turning from your former associates, for you will everywhere meet them and everywhere be open to their importunities. They will invite you to spree with them whenever occasion offers, but—’

A smile of a very undefinable description forced its way to Maida's lip, and looking on that smile, Mr. Evelyn felt obliged to stop his exhortation, notwithstanding his dislike to succumb to a prisoner's feelings. Whatever he meant further to enforce, he let off in a third shrill ‘ahem,’ and then proceeded to tell Maida that she was to go into

Miss Evelyn's room at seven o'clock to light the fire, the mornings still being too cold for an invalid—and that having lighted the fire she was to attend to any order given her by Miss Evelyn, and finally go down and prepare the breakfast.

On leaving the parlour Maida tried to drop an orthodox convict curtsy, but that curtsy being a failure it was followed by one of Miss Perkins's aversions. 'O, uncle! uncle!' sobbed Bridget, 'how could you! This dreadful place—I wish I could go back to England; if it was not for dear Em, I'd go home directly. I'm so glad she wasn't present.'

'Oh, she's been doing more for Maida all this while than you and I, I answer for it.'

'Yes, she has been to the Fountain of Mercy,' smiled Bridget, through her tears. 'I wish Uncle Herbert were home, he would do Maida good.'

'Then you think she needs doctoring? I thought you were after seconding Lucy's adoration of the poor woman.'

'This horrid place! I am sure a crust in England is better than dainties out here,' muttered Miss D'Urban.

'I fear little Charlie would grumble over a crust; but I hope brighter days are in store for Van Diemen's Land. Politician or not, no one relishes government sauce to his bread—eh, Bridget? But it's good Uncle Herbert don't hear me.'

Bridget did not hear him, either ; and yet, as if her ear had received an impression of a somewhat jocular speech, she said—

‘I don’t think you are half so hardhearted as you pretend to be, Uncle Ev ; you make the poor creatures all in a flutter, and fancy you a *monster*, while really you are very tolerably susceptible.’

‘Mine is the hardness of necessity, Bridget ; if I show them my teeth at first, it is only that I may not have to bite them by-and-by. If you could see what fools your aunt and I have been made by them, you would not wonder that my heart puts on an iron casing before it deals with prisoners ; and of all prisoners, these probationers. I’d rather hire twenty raw, rough apprehensions fresh from the policeman’s hand, than one of these p’s from the schools of crime called Probation Stations.’

Bridget lamented her question, for she saw it had raised the anti-convict principle so strong in Uncle Ev that she feared a storm only could carry it off ; but a mere puff sufficed for the present. The well-worn simile of parent and child assisted Mr. Evelyn’s ideas.

‘It’s all right and fair that children should help their parents in their old age ; but that one unfortunate wight should have so much of the bother and annoyance is abominable ; ’t isn’t Christian. The same Bible that says, “Children, obey your

parents," says also, "Parents, provoke not your children to wrath." "

And provoked by his Britannic parent, very wrathfully strode Mr. Evelyn (the child representing Tasmania) up and down his handsomely-furnished parlour, rendering, as he strode, sundry grunts, the result of undigested anger.

Bridget hated the anti-convict controversy; and fancying, in the depths of girlish vanity, that she was going to be made a party in it, she jumped up and managed to divert uncle by praising his oratory.

'Were you preparing that grand speech, uncle, when you retreated beneath the sign of the starfish during those solemn hours before prayers? If I had known what you were about, wouldn't I have disturbed you, that's all! Not Em even should have prevented me. Tell me, were you getting it up then?'

'No; my speech, as you call it, was an extempore: I felt quite eloquent over that splendid creature—a very Boadicea. But when I say extempore, I must qualify my words. A prayer is not always extemporaneous because it is *unwritten*. The head of a family who daily conducts devotion without a compilation, follows by degrees as marked a formula as though he read each sentence from a book. The same set of phrases which a stranger thinks a beautiful impromptu, the children

have yawned over from their earliest admission to the domestic altar. From having so often addressed prisoners on their entrance into service, I have, unawares, adopted a form which my mind uses on state occasions.'

'Well, Uncle Ev, extempore or not, it was an affair sufficiently awful; but the examination was worse than all.'

'And you, cruel child, tried to make me break down. When you have been here a little longer you will learn what sharks you have to encounter; and if you don't want every particle of feeling torn from your heart, you will have to hide it where sharks' eyes can't detect it. In an instant they discover who *has* or who has *not* any feeling to throw away on them, and woe to him who becomes their victim.'

'You do not surely call humanity *thrown* away on them?' Bridget looked shocked, and awaited his reply.

'*Humanity* is *never* thrown away, Bridget; but that tender pity which you show, and which they designate either "*feelins*" or "*greenness*" is decidedly wasted, for two reasons, namely—'

'I don't want to hear them,' cried Bridget, stopping her ears, 'for fear they should come into my head the next time I'm green to the prisoners. I don't wish to be hardened before my time. I don't believe that feeling or anything else *good* is

thrown away on them ; nor do you either, really, only you like to find out their characters before you show yourself the dear Uncle Ev that you are.'

'And you want to be cheated out of a few more shillings for snuff before you give over—eh, Bridget?' retorted Uncle Ev.

Bridget blushed to her ears, for she had been thoroughly deceived out of a shilling by Janet's long face and sincere sighs, which had grown deeper and oftener until they had ended in a hope that 'the dear young lady would *lend* her a trifle to buy a pinch of snuff to stop them tears from blinding her poor old eyes.'

'And you've a few more old dresses for the three balls,' persisted Uncle Ev, 'before you are ready to believe me?'

'I declare it's very shabby of you to bring my sins to remembrance,' replied Bridget, pretending to pout, and really vexed ; 'as if 't isn't horrid enough to be cheated, without being laughed at into the bargain. At any rate, I like the way Uncle Herbert treats prisoners ; even the *bad* like *him*.'

'But Herbert does not make such good servants of them as I do. I have had no less than five good ones since I have been out here.'

'Ah ! that is only because he never keeps them long enough. Em told me that when he had a



house of his own he always took in those who needed a little care or training before they could get other places.'

'Poor Herbert! both he and his wife made themselves slaves to a system that never rewarded their long self-sacrifice.'

'The anti-convict question,' thought Bridget, hastily changing the subject into,

'Oh, uncle! I mean to accept your challenge to Maida, some day, and hold a conversation respecting your speech. You can never be a true Englishman, and advise her to forget England.'

'It will be for her happiness to do so, and as quickly as she can, too. England is a kind friend but an implacable enemy. It is too late now, love, to commence another branch of this many-branched topic.'

Bridget fetched her bed-candle, and as she was lighting it said—

'How you *did* tease poor Maida about whether she had any children.'

'Well, well, if I was absent you took care I shouldn't remain so. Night, night, Bridget; take a peep at Charlie, and see that dear Em has her jelly before you go to bed.'

'Oh, Em! I'm so glad you've not been down stairs; there has been such a fuss. If it weren't for you, I'd leave this horrid place: but I am not

going to disturb you, poor dear tired one, with a history of it.'

'You cannot tell me more than I know already,' and Emmeline heaved a sigh from the very depths of her heart.

'Isn't Maida a lovely woman? I've formed a romance about her already.'

'I did not see her; I never once looked towards where she sat at prayers; I dread to see her to-morrow; I suppose she will have to light my fire as Janet used to.'

'Emmeline,' said Bridget, in a low, frightened voice, as she drew close to her cousin's bed, 'what do you think her crime is? I feel rather nervous to sleep alone.'

'Something very bad: a person in that station of life has no temptation to commit small sins; forgery, most likely. Has uncle told you?'

Bridget was unwilling to communicate her alarm to the invalid, but it was against nature to have a secret (a dreadful one, too,) and keep it a secret; so bending over the bed, she whispered—

'Murder!'

To her surprise, Emmeline only smiled.

When Mr. Evelyn left the parlour in order to retire for the night, he found Lucy sitting on a stair outside the door.

Though she had been patiently waiting there in the dark for the last three-quarters of an hour to

speak to him, she seemed about to run off when she saw him.

‘Lucy, what’s this? My orders are—bed at ten o’clock. This is a bad beginning indeed; take care what you and your friend are about.’

With a desperate effort, as though she would try though she should fail, the little housemaid said—

‘Please, sir, may Maida and me change places; she an’t fit for the dirty work, and I can do it nice?’

‘No, Lucy; she’s a large woman, and more capable of hard work than you; or if she is not she will not do for me.’

‘Please, sir, to make no remark on it, cause she don’t know nothing to my asking, it were my own congesting, sir. You’ll have never a fault to find with her work, dirty or clean; but that don’t alter her having to do it, noways it don’t.’

During an extra long interval occupied by Mr. Evelyn in extracting a waster from the candle, Lucy’s round, shiny face looked up beggingly at him, whilst an infinity of quick curtseys seemed to bob out—‘Please, sir! *do*, sir!’ between each fresh attack of the snuffers. The waster would not yield; its obstinacy afforded Lucy time to ‘congest’ an irresistible plea.

‘Please, sir, she’d teach Master Charles manners better nor he has ever learnt ’em. Lor! the looks

of her is right away lovely, and all on 'em says it is enough to make one grand to look at her—and I know Master Charlie 'll soon set a sight on her, sir.'

Every muscle of Mr. Evelyn's mouth twitched with emotion rather contrary to anger; it is a wonder, therefore, that he managed from such a mouth to evoke so formidable, so inexorable a 'No!' Advancing three stairs towards his room, he turned.

'Once for all, Lucy, let me hear no more of this nonsense; if Maida is a wise woman she'll take the punishment of her sin quietly, if not, she'll go to Cascades, and you'd better warn her.'

Lucy threw up her eyes to see if a thunderbolt were falling; then dropping one of her old humble curtseys, she disappeared beneath the staircase.

We have followed Maida from the bar of justice to the scene of her expatriation. The family has retired to rest; one by one its members have dropt to pleasant sleep. But Emmeline is wakeful; she is not aware that she has a companion in unrest in the occupant of the attic; one who, although morning has overtaken midnight, still stands at her little window gazing out on what sky is visible through the narrow aperture. The candle has burnt out, therefore her figure is indistinct, but the dim light of heaven falls on her face and discovers the features of Maida Gwynnham—fea-

tures enigmatic in their calmness of expression, and singularly disregardant of wearied nature's demand in the unabating vigil which absorbs them into death-like quiescence. Save during the involuntary solitude of the cells, or the few moments snatched from the surveillance of the officers and the company of her shipmates, Maida has not been alone since she left England; when therefore she closes her bedroom door upon herself she can scarcely believe she is unwatched, nor that from some unseen corner a voice will not command her to unbolt the door she has dared to lock.

Standing in the middle of the room with upraised hand and lamp, she explores every nook from which surprise is possible. Then feeling safe from the Misses Perkins' and Snub's persecutions, she sets her bundle on the floor, and kneeling before it, draws forth the Bible given her by Mr. Herbert, but not to seek comfort from its precious pages, as the earnest looker-on may hope; no, what comfort she expects lies not within that volume. With eager fingers she pulls off the morocco cover that preserves the binding and a letter falls to the ground. She seizes it and reads it through and through until its contents should be stamped upon her soul; the letter bears date of nearly two years ago, and is one that Norwell contrived to forward to her just before the transport sailed. Once she suddenly dashes the letter from

her and spurns it with her foot; then, as though the senseless paper were a thing of life, she takes it tenderly up and folds it to her bosom while her lips hastily murmur words inaudible, that have no effect on the senseless paper, though they seem to work in *her* a succession of emotions. She then stops short to think out a thought too sensitive to be continued; save by the undivided assistance of body and mind.

The candle is expiring in the socket and that intricate thought has not been traced; it still occupies her, until, determined to lay *it* and the letter by together, Maida disturbs the former with a sigh and replaces the latter in her Bible. She then remembers she has a master, the recollection brings a new succession of feelings, and she is rather pleased than otherwise with him. His inflexible will and tight-handed control will afford her a somewhat tangible to bear. It is the thumbing of the low-bred Snubs, the petty malignities of the upstart Perkins that make her spirit writhe rebellion. As Lucy says, ‘She goes about all them there hard things as tho’ she liked ‘em.’

She recalls her interview with Mr. Evelyn, she thinks of what is expected from her, and thinks and thinks till thought becomes impalpable and merges into that one deep reverie from which we have aroused her.

Has the following Maida to her room been a scrutiny too close? the telling what she did there, in answer to your question, ‘Where is she now?’ a detail too minute? Ah! *you* in English homes, *you* the master and mistress of freewill servants, *you* the honest reapers of honest toil, come with me to that land where the captive exile hasteth to be free—where the sighing of the prisoner ascends from the small apartment in the roof—where dismissed from his master’s presence the convict stands dejected, lonely, friendless; his sense of strangeness rendered more chill and dreary by the remembrance of chains which bind him to the land, how strange and loveless soever it may be. Come there with me, and, unless void of kindly sympathy, you shall learn that the record is neither trivial nor uninteresting, though it only inform you that a convict woman gazes out into the night; for, deeply folded in that information, you shall discern records past and prophetic, each full of pain and disappointment. And within that woman’s tranquil exterior you shall discover a world of passions active unto tumult, of memories sorrowful to poignancy. How few amongst the multitudes attending a court of justice give more than a passing thought to their doomed fellow-creatures removed one by one from the bar! There is a breathless silence while the sentence is being pronounced, and a murmur of applause or dissatis-

faction as the case demands, when it has proceeded from the judge's lips ; but how few analyse into a definite meaning the legal form of sentence which has fallen on the ear of the poor wretch concerned ; annihilating his life-long hopes, crushing his temporal, and too often his immortal prospects.

There is a vague conception that the prisoner will be taken back to prison and thence sent across the sea, and that, touching that country beyond the sea, he will forthwith become an object of terror, a ruffian, a bushranger, an excommunicate, against whom every one's hand may be raised, and whose hand is raised against every one, as though in the coasts of that distant land lay some horrible property potent to transform the man into a fiend ; or else, stories of criminals who have raised themselves from penal servitude to luxurious mastership being current, there is an angry notion that crime is *rewarded* and not *chastened* in being banished to Australian shores. Here ceases all surmise on the future career of the miserable being who a moment before stood, trembling and haggard, at the dock ; and who in disappearing from the court has likewise disappeared from the stage of recognised existence ; his name has been blotted out from the book of moral life, and henceforward the memory of him perishes. But his disappearance affects no one in the assembly, it is followed by no inquiry, he is not missed ;



few know or care to know that he lives on somewhere—that his life is ebbing in a routine of degradation embodied, but not perceptible, in the sentence passed upon him. Perchance to one more benevolent heart may recur a thought of him whose anxious features arrested his attention as he listened to the learned counsel pleading in his behalf, and such an one may exclaim, ‘I wonder what has become of that poor man whose trial we heard.’

But not all his wondering, questioning, or replying can convey to his mind an adequate idea of what transportation is, nor convince him that it does not consist of heavy chains, the slashing whip, barren shores, murders and executions, though none of these are wanting amongst the accumulated items that make transportation a punishment more terrible to some than death itself, to many an award exceeding the offence, and to *all* an infliction far beyond judicial intention when it sends the offender from his home.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.





